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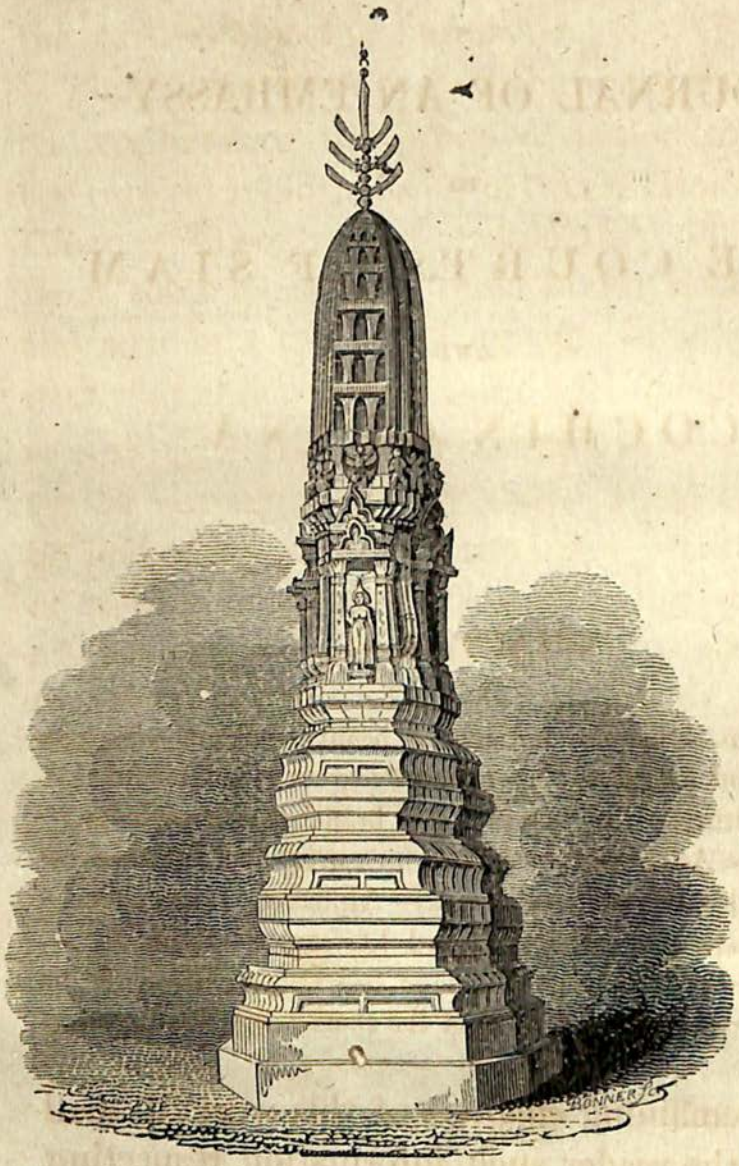

A SIAMESE TEMPLE AT BANGKOK.

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JOURNAL OF AN EMBASSY

TO

THE COURTS OF SIAM

AND

COCHIN CHINA.

CHAPTER I.

Physical form.—Siamese notions of beauty.—Dress.—Various customs and usages.—Funerals.—Progress in the useful arts.—Architecture.—Progress in higher branches of knowledge.—Kalendar.—Arithmetic, weights, measures, and coins.—Geography and navigation.—Music.—Alphabet.—Language.—Siamese literature.—Bali or sacred literature.—Education.—General observations on the nations and tribes between India and China.—General estimate of the character of the Siamese.

In the remaining chapters of this work, I shall lay before the reader such information respecting the people whom I visited, and their country, as was collected by myself, or others, during our voyage, and which could not be included in the Journal without frequently interrupting the narrative, and thus impairing the interest which

might otherwise belong to it. The details of this subject will naturally commence with Siam, the earliest object of inquiry.

The Siamese are one of the most considerable and civilized of the group of nations inhabiting the tropical regions, lying between Hindostan and China. These nations, while they differ widely from those adjacent to them in physical form, in the structure of their language, in manners, institutions and religion, agree with one another in so remarkable a manner in all these characters, that I am disposed to consider them entitled to be looked upon as a distinct and peculiar family of the human race. The following delineation of the physical form of this race is drawn from the Siamese, but probably applies to the whole family.

In stature the Siamese are shorter than the Hindoos, the Chinese, or the Europeans, but taller than the Malays. The average height of twenty men, taken indiscriminately, was found by us, on trial, to be five feet three inches, the tallest being five feet eight inches, and the shortest five feet two inches. This would make them about an inch taller than the Malays, and an inch and a half shorter than the Chinese. Their lower limbs are well formed, contrary to what obtains among the natives of Hindostan. Their hands are stout, and destitute of the extreme softness and delicacy which characterize those of the Hindoos. Their

Seamese

Chinese

Asiatic Negro

Negro of the Malay Countries

Khasi

Cochinchinese

Chinese

Hindoo

Pub. by R. Ackermann, London, 1818

EIGHT NATIONAL PORTRAITS.

Drawn from the Life by Edward Rudd.

persons in general are sufficiently robust and well proportioned, being destitute, however, of the grace and flexibility of the Hindoo form. On the other hand, their make is lighter, less squab, and better proportioned, than that of the Indian islanders. Their complexion is a light brown, perhaps a shade lighter than that of the Malays, but many shades darker than that of the Chinese. It never approaches to the black of the African negro or Hindoo. Writers on the natural history of man, judging from the remote analogy of plants, have been disposed to undervalue colour as a discriminating character of the different races. But still I am disposed to consider it as intrinsic, obvious, and permanent a character, as the form of the skull, or any other which has been more relied upon. The hair of the head is always black, lank, coarse, and abundant. On every other part of the body it is scanty, as with the Malayan and American races; and the beard especially is so little suited for ornament, that it is never worn, but on the contrary plucked out and eradicated, according to the practice of the Indian islanders. The head is generally well proportioned, and well set upon the neck and shoulders, but frequently of remarkable flatness in the occipital part. The face differs greatly from that of the European or Hindoo, the features never being bold, prominent, or well defined. The nose is small, round at the point, but not flattened, as

in the negro; and the nostrils, instead of being parallel, diverge greatly. The mouth is wide, but not projecting; the lips are rather thick; the eyes are small, having the iris black, and the white of a yellow tinge, following as usual the complexion of the skin. The outer angles are more turned up than in the Western races; the eyebrows are neither prominent nor well marked. But, perhaps, the most characteristic feature of the whole countenance is the breadth and height of the cheek bones, which gives the face the whole form of a lozenge, instead of the oval figure which constitutes the line of beauty among the nations of Western Asia and Europe. Upon the whole, although we often meet among the Siamese with countenances that are not disagreeable, and admit that they are certainly a handsomer people than either the Chinese or Indian islanders, beauty, according to our notions of it, is a stranger to them. The physiognomy of the Siamese, it may be added, conveys rather a gloomy, cheerless, and sullen air, and their gait is slow, sluggish, and ungraceful. This is the judgment of an European, and probably would be so of a native of Western Asia; but it is necessary to add that the Siamese, vain in every thing, have a standard of beauty of their own, and are by no means disposed to bow to our opinions on this subject. I one day pointed out to some Siamese at

Calcutta a young and beautiful Englishwoman, and wished to know their opinion of her. They answered, that I should see many handsomer when I visited Siam! La Loubere, by his own account, exhibited to the Siamese the portraits of some celebrated beauties of the Court of Louis XIV., and was compelled to acknowledge that they excited no admiration whatever. A large doll which he exhibited was more to their taste; and a young nobleman, according to the Siamese method of estimating the fair sex, said with admiration, that a woman of such an appearance would be worth, at Yuthia, five thousand crowns!

If this description of the physical form of the Siamese be applied to all the inhabitants of the wide region to which I have alluded, it must be taken, with some allowances, at the extreme points, where, no doubt, some intermixture has taken place with the neighbouring races. Thus the Cochin Chinese, the neighbours of the Chinese, have a little more beard, and are fairer than their neighbours immediately to the west and south of them. On the other hand, the Burmans, and still more the people of Aracan, Cassay, and Assam, who, no doubt, have intermixed more or less with the Hindoos, have more beard, more prominent features, and a darker complexion than their neighbours to the south, and this in proportion as they are respec-

tively nearer to, or more distant from, the country of the Hindoos.

The dress of the Siamese is sufficiently singular and extravagant. Both sexes wear fewer clothes than any other tolerably civilized people of the East—the head and feet being always naked, the upper part of the body generally so, and the loins and thighs alone therefore being covered. The garment for the latter consists of a piece of silk, or cotton cloth, of from five to seven cubits long, which is passed round the loins and thighs, and secured in front in its own folds, leaving the knees entirely bare, a practice considered by their Malayan neighbours —such is the force of custom—at once rude and indecent. The better classes permit the ends of the dress to hang loosely in front, but the lower orders tuck them under the body, securing them behind. This is not a matter which is left to the discretion of the parties, but enforced by law, or by a custom equally imperative; for the plebeian who infringes it is liable to summary punishment from the followers of any person of condition who may casually meet him. The only other material portion of dress is a narrow scarf, about four cubits long, and commonly of silk. This is worn either round the waist, or thrown carelessly over the shoulders. When in this last situation it forms an imperfect covering for the

bosoms of the females, which, however, are much more frequently wholly exposed and unprotected. I have sometimes, however, seen the lower orders of women wear a tight vest for comfort or convenience, when engaged in labour. The colours of which the Siamese are fond are dark and sombre, and light colours or white seldom enter in any considerable quantity into their dress. The last, except as mourning, is worn only by the lay servants of the temples, and by certain mendicant nuns, neither of whom are much respected.

The mode of dressing the head is singular and grotesque. A man when he is full dressed ought to have the whole hair of the head closely shaven, with the exception of a circle on the crown, about four inches in diameter, where the hair is allowed to remain of the length of about an inch and a half or two inches. As the process of shaving the head, however, is not very punctually performed, it commonly happens that the common hair of the head is an inch or two long, and the circle on the crown double that length, the whole, from its natural strength, staring and standing upright, so as to convey not only a whimsical but a very wild look. Women do not shave the hair of their heads, but always crop it short, leaving also a circle on the crown, which is effected by plucking out the hairs in a narrow line from the brows backwards. No turban or other covering to the head is worn by either sex, with the ex-

ception of a fantastic conical cap put on by the chiefs at certain formal court ceremonies. In this respect, as well as in the mode of wearing the hair, the Siamese agree entirely with the Kambojans, but differ from the people of Pegue and Ava, who wear their hair long, and cover the head with a handkerchief. The Siamese of both sexes in the upper ranks wear a kind of slipper.

Jewellery and trinkets are not much used. The men seldom or never wear ear or finger rings, and amongst females of condition the most usual ornaments are gold necklaces, bracelets, and armlets. The greatest care and expense are bestowed on the dress of children up to the age of fourteen. At an entertainment given to us by the Prahklang, his own children, and those of his brother, were loaded with jewels, among the most remarkable of which was a kind of golden coronet covering the circle of longer hair on the crown of the head.

The Siamese, like the Chinese and other nations of the farther East, permit the nails of their hands to grow to an unnatural and inconvenient length. All the nails of both hands are treated in this manner, and the practice is general with both sexes, and with persons of all ranks; the only difference being, that persons of condition carry the practice to the greatest extreme. Some successful amateurs may be seen with nails two inches long; and as cleanliness is not a national

virtue, this usage has a very offensive appearance to a stranger.

The Siamese have the same prejudice against white teeth with many other Eastern people, and at an early age they stain them with an indelible black, without, however, filing and destroying the enamel of the front teeth, like the Indian islanders. In other respects, they evince no disposition to disfigure the natural form of the body, and are especially to be distinguished from the Burmans and Peguans, by the general practice of tattooing the whole body, which prevails among the two last tribes.

Among the Siamese the use of tobacco has become universal; they chew it in moderate quantities, but smoke it perpetually. A Siamese is seldom to be seen without a cigar in his mouth, or stuck behind his ear ready for use. Of the areca and betel-nut they are perhaps the most constant and persevering consumers of all the people of the East, exceeding in this respect even the Malays themselves. The soil and climate are peculiarly suited to the production of both, and the cheapness which is the consequence, no doubt contributes, along with the indolent character of the people, to render the consumption so great. The preparation, as they use it, is the same as in other countries, with the exception of the catechu, which forms no part of the ingredients.

Of the customs observed at marriages, I have

little information that is new to communicate. Marriage ceremonies, as in other countries of the East, are accompanied by theatrical representations, gymnastics, music, and distribution of presents. The actual ceremony is performed by the senior male relations; it consists in joining the right hands of the bride and bridegroom with a white cotton thread, and passing a similar one round their heads, brought into juxtaposition. The priests repeat hymns in the Bali language, and an elder of the family pronounces the words "Be man and wife, and live together until death part you."

Funeral rites are matters of great moment, and I have already given some description of them in the body of the narrative. Those to which I have alluded, are not, however, the only ones practised. The bodies of the great are always kept for a long time embalmed before being consumed on the funeral pile. The period is determined by the rank of the deceased, and extends from one to twelve months. The persons to whom these honours are paid in the most distinguished manner, are the high officers of state, the princes and princesses of the blood, but, above all, the high-priest and the king. The costliness and splendour of the rites on these occasions may be judged of, from the following description of those observed at the funeral of the late king. It was furnished to me by Mr. Gillies, a most

respectable and intelligent British merchant, who resided for some time in Siam, and was an eye-witness.

"Immediately on the death of the King, which happened in July, 1824, the building of a large edifice in the form of a temple, was commenced for a funeral pile for burning the body on, according to the custom of the country; not only in regard to the kings, but to all classes of the people. This building, which took nine months in finishing, was very extensive, and covered at least half an acre of ground. It consisted of a large open dome, about fifty feet high, supported upon immense wooden pillars, the finest that could be procured in Siam. The roof, which was of various fantastic forms, the parts rising one above the other until it came to a point, was covered with tiles. From the centre of it rose a spire, composed of five or six flights or stories, decreasing in size as they rose, and each flight terminating in a gallery, or circular walk. The edifice was crowned with a tall slender rod. The height of the whole fabric I could not exactly learn, but, from its appearance, I should think it could not be less than three hundred cubits. The whole of the interior as well as exterior of the building, was painted partly green and partly yellow, and in some places covered with gold and silver leaf, which gave it a very rich and splendid appearance, especially at a distance. It was also sur-

rounded with a variety of images representing their deities. Inside the great dome there was a small temple precisely in the form of the large one; in the centre of this, and about two-thirds up, was a platform, over which was a small spire supported upon four pillars about thirty feet high. On this platform was to be placed the body. The whole of this interior building, but particularly near the place where the body was to be deposited, was highly gilded, and otherwise richly decorated with gold and silver leaf. The great building was surrounded with low sheds or houses, for the accommodation of the priests, who flocked from all parts of the kingdom to assist at the ceremony. Outside of these sheds there were erected twelve small pagodas, at convenient distances from each other, and these also were decorated in a manner corresponding with the large temple. The ground within the sheds just mentioned, which was about thirty yards wide, was covered in with basket-work of bamboos, as were also all the passages leading from the palace, for the better accommodation of the royal pedestrians. This was the state of the preparations a few days previous to the commencement of the ceremony.

"The 23d of April, 1825, was the day fixed upon for the removal of the remains of his late Majesty from the palace to the funeral pile.* I

* The King died on the 20th of July, 1824, and his body was therefore kept for full nine months.—C.

was invited, along with some of my friends, to see the ceremony. We reached the place appointed for us as early as seven o'clock in the morning, to avoid the bustle of the crowd collecting from all parts. The situation appointed for us was not the most convenient, being only an open shed close by the road along which the procession was to pass. Here we were much annoyed with heat and dust, but being as well provided for as the Cochin Chinese Ambassador, who had come to Siam for the express purpose of honouring the ceremony, we had no right to complain: we had, moreover, the honour of being accompanied by the Prah-klang's son, and by the Intendant of the Port. The procession began to move at nine o'clock, or in Siamese time at three o'clock, and in the following order.

"Several hundred soldiers, dressed principally in blue and red camlet, with caps of the same material, walking at a slow pace, without order, and bearing in their hands long poles of bamboo in the manner of flagstaffs, on the tops of which were artificial flowers of large size.

"A similar number of men, not soldiers, carrying banners of silk and cloth, of a triangular shape, upon which were various devices; consisting of dragons, serpents, and other monsters, painted or embroidered.

"Two carriages, each drawn by a single horse.

"The figure of a rhinoceros of the size of an

elephant, upon a sledge or carriage upon low wheels, drawn by men and horses, with a small temple on its back, in which was a quantity of yellow dresses, to be given to the priests as offerings.

Two figures of elephants (very large), drawn as above.

Two figures of horses, similarly drawn.

Four figures of large monkeys, two and two.

Four figures of eagles, two and two.

Four figures of cocks, two and two.

Four figures of wild men or giants, two and two.

Four figures of lions of immense size, two and two.

"These were followed by the figures of a variety of other indescribable beasts and birds, two and two, and each figure bore its supply of dresses for the priests.

"Eight hundred men dressed in white, with white caps or helmets. These represented celestial messengers, and their purpose was, as if to show the soul of the deceased King the way to Heaven. Along with these were many bands of music.

"The late King's household. Some of these bore over their heads a large umbrella or canopy, composed of three or four tiers, and having long fringes suspending from it. Others had swords of state in their hands, and all walked in the procession in great disorder and confusion.

"The late King's brother, in a handsome open carriage, of singular form and workmanship, highly gilded and ornamented, and the roof terminating in a small temple containing cloth for the priests. This was drawn by a number of men and horses.

Choufa,* the late King's son, in a similar carriage, but still handsomer.

Choufa Noë,† the late King's nephew, a boy, in a very superb carriage, holding in his hand the end of a sash of gold tissue, the other end being attached to the next carriage immediately after him, and which contained the body of the late King. This last was most elegantly gilded and decorated, and supported by the great officers of state, walking in single files at the sides of the carriage, all dressed in white, having helmets on their heads, sandals on their feet, and carrying white wands in their hands.

"A carriage containing a quantity of sandal-wood, and other perfumes for the pile.

"The bier was followed by soldiers, figures of animals, musicians, and messengers, of the same number and kind with those which pre-

* This was the eldest legitimate son of the late King, and his intended successor; but the throne, as will be seen in another place, was usurped by his illegitimate brother, the present King.—C.

† This and the last are titles, and literally mean the Prince, and the Little Prince, of Heaven.

ceded it, and in the same order. After these, came the late King's brothers, forty in number, all on horseback, in single file, and according to seniority. Each was followed by a train of servants on foot, dressed in white. The procession terminated at twelve o'clock, with little confusion, and no outrage whatever, notwithstanding the immense crowd which was collected, and which consisted of nearly the whole population of Bang-kok, and a vast number of strangers from the most distant provinces of the kingdom.

"On the following day, we were invited to see the body lie in state on the funeral pile, in the small temple, within the great dome, previous to its being burnt. On our arrival within the palace enclosure, we were conducted in by old Phya Chula and his son,* who of course did not forget to exact from us all the necessary marks of respect to the body of their late master. The large dome had four entrances, each of which was guarded night and day by a prince of the blood, from the time the body was placed within it. On our arrival at one of these entrances, we were obliged to take off our shoes. Having then paid our compliments to the Prince, we proceeded to the place where the body lay. On approaching it, we made our obeisance, and

* Mahomedans of the sect of Ali, employed in the department of the customs.

sat down, of course, on the floor, which was, however, well covered with mats. The scene presented here was the most magnificent I ever saw. From the roof of the large dome were suspended the most beautiful ornaments of Siamese manufacture in gold and silver, made for the occasion, as well as an infinite variety of European chandeliers, lamps, &c. But the small temple was still more sumptuously ornamented, being literally covered with gold and silver leaf. Over the body were suspended a variety of gold and silver branches, or small trees; and the floor round it was covered with a variety of musical instruments, clocks, looking-glasses, and other furniture, all that could be begged or borrowed throughout the country. The whole had a surprising effect. Having taken our leave of this place, with the same reverence as we entered it, we proceeded to view the amusements provided for the evening; consisting of fire-works, tumbling, rope-dancing, wrestling, &c. The most amusing part of the exhibition, was the scrambling of the mob for the pieces of money, scattered among them from four small tablets erected for the purpose. These were placed at short distances from each other, immediately before the place where the King and his suite sat. From each of these were thrown occasional handsful of coin, consisting of half and quarter ticals. In this

manner, a few hundred ticals were expended nightly, during the continuance of the festival, which lasted ten days. In addition to this, there were given away in alms daily at the palace, during the same period, five hundred ticals. The amusements generally, were very poor. What appeared to me deserving of more admiration than any thing else, was the very orderly manner in which the people conducted themselves, notwithstanding the vast concourse collected from all parts of the country. The preparations and conduct of the whole affair did the Siamese much credit, and would not disgrace any country in Europe. They certainly thought not a little of it themselves, and frequently asked me if I ever saw the like before. I was obliged to confess I had not. The fire from which the pile is lighted they pretend is celestial, having, as they allege, been taken from a ball of fire which fell at the door of the palace several centuries ago, and which has never since been suffered to extinguish."

Charity to the lower animals is considered by the Siamese as a religious virtue of great merit, and this frequently gives rise at funerals to a disgusting and abominable rite, never performed, however, except in compliance with the dying request of the deceased. It consists in cutting slices of flesh from the corpse, and with these

feeding the birds of prey and dogs, which are seen in numbers about the temples, waiting for this horrid feast. After this ugly rite, the remains of the body are buried in the usual manner. The only honourable funeral amongst the Siamese, consists in burning the body, and the practice is very general. It seems to be viewed as a religious rite, and as a ceremony necessary to assist the passage of the soul to a higher grade in the scale of transmigration, and finally to its extinction or rest. The persons not deemed worthy of this rite, are women dying pregnant, or in child-birth; persons who come to a sudden death; persons who die of the small-pox, and malefactors. The death of all such is considered as the punishment of some offence in the present or a former state of existence. They are consequently deemed unworthy of regular funereal rites, and buried. Under ordinary circumstances, so much importance is attached to the rite of burning the dead, that if the ceremony cannot be performed soon after death either from poverty, or from the party dying at a distance, the body is first buried, and afterwards, as soon as convenient or practicable, disinhumed, and consigned to the funeral pile. Of persons of distinction, a few of the bones are kept, and either preserved in urns in the houses of their relatives, or buried, with little pyramidal monuments

over them, in the ground adjacent to the temples. Of these monuments, we saw a good number; they are small and paltry, without any inscription.

The practice of immolating living victims with the dead, as practised in Hindostan, and some other countries of the East, is unknown to the Siamese in any form—one advantage, at least, if there be no other, which humanity gains from the avowed principle of the doctrines of *Buddha*, which denounces the shedding of blood.

There is one species of suicide, however, which is reckoned meritorious. This is considered as a solemn religious sacrifice of the highest order. The victim who devotes himself to self-destruction, sits down on the ground, covered all over with quantities of cloth dipped in oil and smeared with other combustibles. He sets fire to the materials himself, and patiently suffers death, with his hands raised before his face, in an attitude of devotion. The relations of one who performs such a sacrifice are for ever after taken under the special protection of the sovereign. Such sacrifices as these are extremely rare, as may be inferred from the nature of the reward.

The progress which the Siamese have made in the useful arts is extremely slender, nor would it indeed be very reasonable to expect either ex-

pertness or industry from a people who are compelled to devote one-third of the labour of their manhood to the service of a highly oppressive government. Every mechanic of any skill is immediately seized upon, and becomes the retainer of the King, or of some courtier, or other man in authority, who employs him for life on some useless service of vanity or ostentation. It is accordingly a matter of difficulty for a private individual, or a stranger, to obtain the services even of the most homely mechanic, and the few that can be procured are usually natives of China, or Cochin China, and not Siamese. There is no one useful art in which the Siamese have attained any distinction, and their industry appears never to have produced any ingenious fabric that can bear a moment's comparison with the cotton manufacture of Hindostan, or the wrought silks and porcelain of China. It is even remarkable, that in the fabrication of jewellery, a proficiency in which has often been remarked among ruder people, they have attained little skill; and, in fact, their gold and silver trinkets, and their vessels of gold and silver, are commonly imported from China. The only exception to this consists in certain gold and silver vases, fabricated in the palace, and presented to the chiefs, as orders or insignia of title and office. These are of handsome form and neat workmanship; a circumstance which may be at-

tributed to their being of one invariable form, and the consequent dexterity which the artificers acquire by frequent practice. This form has not varied for at least one hundred and thirty years, for the figure of one given by La Loubere is an exact representation of those in use at the present day.

The Siamese also receive their utensils of zinc and brass from China, and the resident Chinese are the only manufacturers of articles of tin, although a product of the country. It is through the ingenuity of the same people, that the stores of iron-ore, in which the country abounds, have been of late years rendered available. At present, a considerable quantity of malleable iron is produced, and at Bang-kok there are several extensive manufactories of cast-iron vessels, wholly conducted by the Chinese, and from which the Malay tribes are now very generally supplied with culinary utensils. The cutlery and tools in use amongst the Siamese are of the rudest and simplest description, and they have not even acquired any skill in the fabrication of implements of destruction, a circumstance to be expected among an unarmed and unwarlike people. The fabrication of fire-arms has scarcely, I believe, been attempted; and for these the Siamese appear always to have trusted to the casual supply derived directly or indirectly from Europeans.

The manufacture of silk and cotton fabrics

is in Siam abandoned wholly to the women, and very little skill is displayed in either; both being of a very coarse and homely texture, and greatly inferior even to the corresponding manufactures of the island of Java and Celebes, prepared under similar circumstances. The art of dyeing is on the same low scale, and this is the more remarkable, since the country abounds in the materials necessary to it. The art of printing silks or cottons is not practised by the Siamese in any shape or form.

The most common description of coarse pottery suited for ordinary domestic purposes, is manufactured by the Siamese, but all the ordinary and better descriptions of porcelain are imported from China, and in large quantities.

The useful architecture of the Siamese is in a very humble state of advancement. The habitations of the lower orders consist always of simple and perishable materials, suitable enough, perhaps, to their climate, and certainly so to their poverty and incapacity of extending the sphere of their enjoyments. In the low alluvial lands, where we had an opportunity of observing their dwellings, they were all raised upon piles, like the habitations of the Malays, the principal material employed in them being the bamboo, and the leaf of the Nipa palm *(Nipa fruticans)*. In the higher lands, the houses, I am told, cease to be built on piles, and the bamboo and nipa

give way to ordinary woods and grasses. I could not learn that solid materials, either of stone, or brick and mortar, were employed anywhere in the construction of the habitations of the peasantry. The houses of the chiefs are most commonly of the same frail materials and inartificial structure as those of the peasantry, but we found a few at the capital constructed of brick and mortar, and roofed with tile. That of the Prah-klang, especially, was even a comfortable and commodious habitation, but being so had a foreign air, and harmonized so little with the meaner structures around it, as to appear altogether out of place.

Edifices and structures for public convenience and utility have not, as far as we could hear or see, any existence in Siam, and neither piety, superstition, charity, nor interest, seem to have led the rulers of this country to construct bridges, wells, tanks, or caravanseras, such as are to be found more or less among all the other considerable nations of Asia. The bridges which we observed at the capital, and in the immediate vicinity of the palace, consisted generally of no more than a single plank; and even within the walls, they amounted to no more than laying over abutments of coarse brick and mortar, a few rough and naked beams. We nowhere observed any attempt to construct an arch.

The absence of public roads is not less remark-

able. We were informed that there were but two considerable roads in the kingdom—that from the new to the old capital, and that from Chantabon to Tungyai. In the vicinity of Bang-kok there are none at all, and here travelling is almost entirely aquatic. In extenuation, however, it ought to be remarked, that both here and in other parts of the low country, the internal navigation is so extensive, cheap, and commodious, as to account, in some measure, for the absence of public roads, and even to compensate for that absence. At Bang-kok, wheel carriages are altogether unknown; and even elephants are prohibited, except to a few of the principal lords. In the upper parts of Lao again, as well as in the mountains to the south-west much of the commerce and intercourse of the country is conducted by means of these animals, which are the beasts of burden best suited to the narrow and steep pathways, which in these parts supply the place of roads.

It happens with the Siamese, as has been observed with all other rude nations, that the chief efforts of their architectural skill are bestowed upon their religious edifices. What Knox observes of the Kings of Ceylon, is not less applicable to the monarchs of Siam. "It appeared," says he, "they spared not for pains and labour to build temples and high monuments to the honour of this god, as if they had been

born only to hew rocks and great stones, and lay them up in heaps."* If nothing existed of the Siamese but their temples, we should be apt, upon a superficial consideration, to pronounce them a people considerably civilized, tolerably well governed, and enjoying no small share of happiness and comfort. Extensive monuments of this nature, indeed, could not exist among a race of mere savages; and their presence argues a certain advance of civilization, some progress in the art of securing a permanent supply of food, and the existence of a population more numerous than the precarious habits of mere savage life could afford; but beyond this, they can be adduced in proof of nothing but despotism on the part of the government, and superstition on the part of the people. These temples have already been fully described. The enclosures and lower walls are constructed of brick and mortar, and destitute of ornament. The roof, gable-ends, doors, and windows, are of solid timber, the first being protected by a covering of tiles. It is upon this portion of the temples that ornament and decoration are most profusely lavished. The wood-work is very generally laboriously and curiously carved, and gilding on wood, in which the Siamese have acquired considerable skill, is not only bestowed

* An Historical Relation of Ceylon, an Island in the East Indies, p. 81.

upon the inside of the buildings, but upon the outside also, even in situations the most exposed to the weather. The portions of a temple which are best executed, and most in accordance with European taste, are the detached tall pyramids and spires by which they are surrounded. These are constructed of solid masonry, and produce a very good effect. Kemfer states that the Siamese temples "do not equal our churches in bigness, but far exceed them in outward beauty, by reason of the many bended roofs, gilded frontispieces, advanced steps, columns, pillars, and other ornaments." I am not, however, of this opinion, and consider that the effect produced by these edifices, is wholly inadequate to the labour and expense bestowed upon them. Their want of height, their inelegant form, the absence of domes, arches, and columns, divest them of all pretension to grace or sublimity, while it is impossible in viewing them to get rid of the association attached to the temporary and perishable nature of the materials. The bare antiquity of a Hindoo or an Egyptian temple, is calculated to give rise to sentiments of veneration, but we can entertain no such feeling in regard to edifices, however costly, raised for temporary purposes, incapable of durability, and unassociated with historical recollections.

Statuary is practised by the Siamese for reli-

gious purposes only. Indeed its limits are still more restricted; it is generally confined to the fabrication of one form, the image of Buddha, and this commonly in a sitting attitude. I saw but two or three statues of this God hewn from stone, and they were brought from China. The greater part of the numerous images of Siam are formed of a composition of plaster, rosin, and oil, mixed up with hair. When the figure is formed, it is covered over with varnish; upon which is laid a thick coat of gilding, so as to conceal all the baser materials. The best images are made of bronze, or brass, and the fabrication of these may be considered as the acme of Siamese skill in the arts. The parts are cast separately, and after being put together, are richly gilded, so as not to be distinguished from those of plaster, without particular examination. The surprizing magnitude of some of these images has been already described. Even these, however, are not calculated for the same lasting durability, as images, or other monuments of stone, being subject to spoliation or destruction during the frequent revolutions and convulsions to which these countries are liable. I was assured that some of the best images were either melted down or carried off entire during the last Burman invasion.

It ought here to be remarked, that while the useful arts practised in Siam are commonly

in the hands of Chinese and other strangers, every thing connected with their religious monuments is entirely executed by native Siamese.

The large produce of grain, oil, salt, sugar, and pepper, which Siam affords, might at first view be considered as some proof of skilful industry on the part of the people; but the two last owe their existence entirely to the Chinese settlers, and the rest depend so much upon peculiar advantages in soil, climate, and communication, that they could scarcely fail to have existed in any state of society or government; and the Government of Siam, with all its faults, has at least this advantage, that it is capable of maintaining a moderate share of internal tranquillity, and of securing the people against the violence of one another, to an extent unknown to many less despotic, but feebler Asiatic states.

In other rude states of society, the priesthood is commonly the depositary of whatever learning and science may exist; but of this advantage the Siamese, and the followers of Buddha, are deprived by a precept of religion, which proscribes to the priesthood all temporal learning, and makes every acquirement unconnected with this subject profane and sinful. The consequence of this is, that medicine, astrology, and astronomy, the favourite sciences of semi-barbarians,

are abandoned to the casual culture of a few strangers. At Bang-kok, we found that all the medical practitioners were Chinese, or Cochin Chinese,—that these were in much repute, and that they imported all their medicines or nostrums from China. Divination and astronomy are now, as at all former periods of our acquaintance with Siam, in the hands of the Brahmins settled in the country. It was from these that we obtained the first Indian astronomical tables brought to Europe; but the present race, from all I could learn, are very ignorant, and even incapable of making the necessary calculations for regulating the kalendar, which is at present effected with the assistance of the Pekin almanack, the arrival of which is anxiously looked for by the first Chinese junk of the season, which is commonly one of those from the Island of Hai-nan.

The following is a sketch of the mode of reckoning and dividing time amongst the Siamese. The day commences at sun-rise. The forenoon is divided into six watches, and the afternoon to sun-set into the same number. From sun-set to midnight makes only two watches, and from midnight to morning again makes the same number. The day watches are called in Siamese *Mong*, and those of the night *Thum*. I did not hear that any smaller sub-divisions of time obtained. The time-keeper made use of is similar to the contrivance used by the Hindoos, viz.

a cup with an aperture at the bottom, placed in a bowl of water, and which sinks at the termination of each watch.

The Siamese week is of seven days, and these correspond generally with those of the other nations of the old world. They are as follow, viz.—Sunday, *Athit;* Monday, *Chan;* Tuesday, *Angkhan;* Wednesday, *Phut;* Thursday, *Prahat;* Friday, *Suk;* and Saturday, *San.* The months are alternately of twenty-nine and thirty days, and twelve months or three hundred and fifty-four days make a year. The months, with the exception of the two first, of the derivation of which I could get no explanation, take their names from the Siamese numerals, the word *Duan,* or moon, being prefixed to each. They are repeated as follow:—

	Days.
1. Duan-ai	29
2. Duan Ji	30
3. Duan Sam	29
4. Duan Si	30
5. Duan Hà	29
6. Duan Hoe	30
7. Duan Chet	29
8. Duan Pet	30
9. Duan Kàu	29
10. Duan Sip	30
11. Duan Sibet	29
12. Duan Sip Song . . .	30:
	354

The Siamese year is solar, and to preserve it as such an intercalary month of thirty days is added to every third year, after the eighth month. The months, it is also to be remarked, are divided into a dark and a bright half, or an increasing and waning moon, as among the Hindoos; and it is the days of these divisions, and not of the month itself as among us, which are reckoned. The Siamese year does not commence with the first month, but corresponds with that of the Chinese. In the year 1822, the new year fell on the 11th of April, being the 5th day of the dark half of the moon.

The great divisions of time are into two cycles, the larger of which is of sixty years, and the lesser of twelve, each year of this last taking the name of some animal in the following order, thus: *Chuat*, the rat; *Chalú*, the ox; *Khan*, the tiger; *Tho*, the hare; *Marong*, the greater snake; *Maséng*, the lesser snake; *Ma-mia*, the horse; *Ma-mee*, the goat; *Wók*, the ape; *Raka*, the cock; *Cho-cho*, the dog; and *Kun*, the hog.

The Siamese have two epochs, or, as they denominate them, *Sa-ka-rat*, a sacred and a popular one. The sacred era dates from the death of Gautama, and the year which commenced on the 11th of April, 1822, was the year 2365, according to this reckoning. This year is used by the Talapoins, and in all matters connected with religion. The vulgar era is said to have

been instituted in commemoration of the introduction of the worship of Gautama into Siam, and to date from that event, which took place in the 1181 year of the sacred epoch, corresponding with the year of Christ 638.* The year commencing with the 11th of April, 1822, was accordingly the 1184 of Siamese time. This epoch is said to have been instituted by a king whose name was Krek. It is used in matters of business; but on ordinary and popular occasions, such as in epistolary writing, it is not unfrequently omitted,—the year of the lesser cycle only being written, together with the day of the week, and of the moon's increase or decrease, in the following manner. "Written on Tuesday, in the 7th month, on the 8th day of the bright half of the Moon of the year of the Horse," which corresponded with the 26th of May, 1822.

The knowledge which the Siamese possess of arithmetic is, from all I could learn, imperfect and superficial. As accomptants, they are slow and inexpert, even with the assistance of the Chinese *sanpan*, upon which they principally rely. They are acquainted with the decimal system of notation, which they mark by characters peculiar to themselves, and which vary much, if they do not altogether differ, from

* By some authorities, the vulgar era is said not to have been instituted until three years after the introduction of the worship of Buddha.

those employed by the people of Lao, Pegue and Ava, while they agree with those employed by the Kambojans.

In the regulation of their measures, weights, and coins, the Siamese have some advantage over their neighbours. Gold and copper are not used as money in Siam, and the currency consists only of cowry shells and silver. The denominations are as follow: two hundred bia, or cowries, make one p'hai-nung; two p'hai-nungs, one song-p'hai; two song-p'hais, one fuang; two fuangs, one salung; four salungs, one bat, or tical; eighty ticals, one cattie; one hundred catties, one picul.

The standard coin is the bat, which Europeans, on what ground I do not know, have called a tical; but there are also coins, though less frequently, of the lower denominations.—These are of a rude and peculiar form. They are, in fact, nothing more than small bits of a silver bar bent, and the ends beaten together. They are impressed with two or three small stamps, not covering the whole surface of the coin. The cattie and picul are, of course, only used in speaking of large sums of money. Gold and silver are weighed by small weights, which have the same denominations as the coins. The p'hai-nung, the lowest of these, is in this case subdivided into thirty-two sagas, or red beans, the *abrus precatorius* of botanists.

The bat, or tical, was assayed at the mint of Calcutta; it was found to weigh two hundred and thirty-six grains; its standard, however, was uncertain, and the value of different specimens varied from one rupee, three anas, and three pies, to one rupee, three anas, and seven pies. The value therefore in sterling money is about *2s. 6d.*, and it is so considered in the course of this work.

In respect to ordinary measures, the Siamese cattie is double the weight of the Chinese cattie, which, as is well known, is equal to one and one third lb. avoirdupois. The picul, however, is of the same weight, consisting, in the one case, of fifty catties only, and in the other of one hundred. In weighing rice and salt, a large measure is used, consisting, in respect to the first, of twenty-two piculs, and of the last of twenty-five: rice is also measured by the basket of which one hundred go to the large measure above mentioned.

The long measures are as follow:—twelve finger breadths make one span; two spans, one cubit; four cubits, one fathom; twenty fathoms, one sen; and one hundred sen, one yuta; or, as it is more commonly pronounced by the Siamese, yut. The fathom is the measure of most frequent use, and the Siamese have a pole of this length divided into its fractional parts. This, as near as I could ascertain, is equal to about

six feet six inches. The sen appears to be also used in the admeasurement of land, and to be the name of a square measure of twenty fathoms to the side.

On the subject of geography, the knowledge of the Siamese is extremely limited indeed, and of distant nations they scarcely know any thing but the name. The Chinese are the only considerable foreign people with whom they hold much intercourse, and whose superiority to themselves they are at all disposed to admit.

I was informed that some attempt had been made by the Court to compile a rude map of the kingdom from native surveys. The following meagre list comprehends the names of all the foreign nations or countries with which the Siamese are acquainted, according to their own pronunciation, viz. Mon, Pegue; Pama, Burma; Lao, Laos; Khomen, Kamboja; Cham, Champa; Yuan, Anam, that is, Cochin China and Tonquin; Tang-kia, Tonquin; Chek or Chin, China; Ya-pun, Japan; Khek, Malay; Chowa, Java; Mung-nge, Celebes; Hua-prek, African, that is to say, "pepper heads," Piam, Hindostan; Thet, Telingana, or the Coast of Coromandel; Langka, Ceylon; Farang, Europe; Frangsit, French; Wilande, Dutch; Angkrit, English; Markan, Anglo-American.

The modern Siamese have nearly as great an aversion to the sea as the ancient Persians.

The institutions of the country, as will be seen hereafter, are completely destructive of the spirit of foreign enterprise. Avarice, indeed, seems often to have seduced the Siamese to attempt foreign commerce, and never to so great an extent as at the present moment. In such enterprises, however, the native Siamese seldom engage personally, for both the pilots and crews of their ships consist of Christians or Chinese.

In music the Siamese are entitled to some distinction among Oriental nations—their airs being more agreeable at least to an European ear than those of any Eastern people, with the exception probably of the Turks and Persians. The melodies of the Siamese are sometimes in a wild and plaintive strain; but more commonly they are in a brisk and lively style, resembling Scotch and Irish music—thus forming, to all appearance, a violent contrast with the sluggish and frigid temper of the people themselves. A full Siamese band ought to consist of not less than ten instruments. The first of these in rank is a kind of staccato, in the form of a semicircle, within which the player sits striking with two small hammers, the notes, or keys, which consist of inverted vessels of brass. The second is another staccato of the same materials, but less compass, in form of a boat; the third, a violin with three strings; the fourth, a guitar of four strings, played with a bit of wood, fastened to the finger;

the fifth, a flute; and the sixth, a flageolet. To these are occasionally added an instrument with four strings, in form of a boat, which is said to be borrowed from the Peguans; and the band is completed by the addition of a drum, cymbals, and castanets.

The interesting question of language requires more attention and learning than I can bestow upon it. My information is derived from others, for I had neither leisure nor opportunity to acquire any thing beyond a very superficial acquaintance with its elements.

The alphabet of the Siamese consists, as they write it, of thirty-nine, but in reality of thirty-eight consonant characters. The vowels and diphthongs are very numerous, and some of them such as neither Europeans nor the natives of Western Asia can pronounce. Notwithstanding the number and variety of the consonants, the language does not embrace several sounds of this class,* which are familiar to the nations of the West. The alphabet, for its own purpose however, is perfect. It is formed on the system and classification of the alphabets of the continent of

* The sound expressed in English by sh, the Persian and Arabic gutturals expressed in Roman letters by kh with z, v; and several others have no existence. G and d have been borrowed from Western India, but are pronounced respectively as k and t; so that Ganga (the Ganges) becomes Kanka; and Dewata, a god, Tewata.

EXPLANATION OF THE VOWELS OF THE SIAMESE ALPHABET

IN THE ANNEXED PLATE.

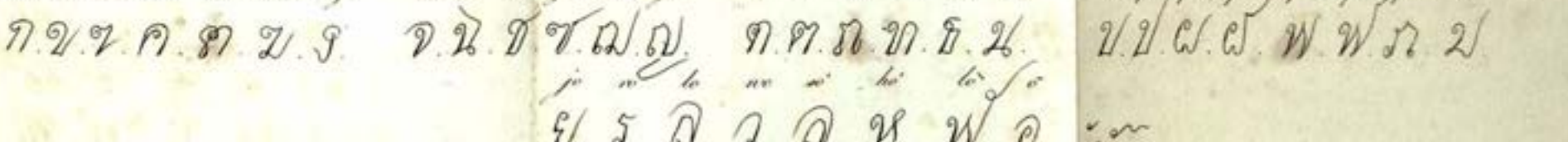
(To face page 38, Vol. II.)

FIGURE 1. The long sound of a; 2. the short Italian i; 3. the same vowel long; 4. a sound for which there is no character in the European languages, but which has some resemblance to the French *u*; 5. the corresponding sound, long; 6. the short Italian u; 7. the corresponding vowel, long; 8. 9. 10. 11. these four characters borrowed from the Sanscrit, and which are sometimes included with the consonants, and sometimes with the vowels, are thus expressed in Roman letters by the Portuguese, rùc, rú, lùc, lú; 12. the letter e of the Italian Alphabet; 13. the same vowel long; 14. a diphthong composed of the short a and short i; 15. the same diphthong, long; 16. a long o; 17. a diphthong composed of the short sounds, a and u; 18. a sound intermediate in length between the long and short a; 19. the short breathing which is necessarily inherent in every consonant; and which the Hindoos, as Sir W. Jones observes, pronounce like our a in 'America." The Siamese pronounce it more like a short o; and it is so written in the

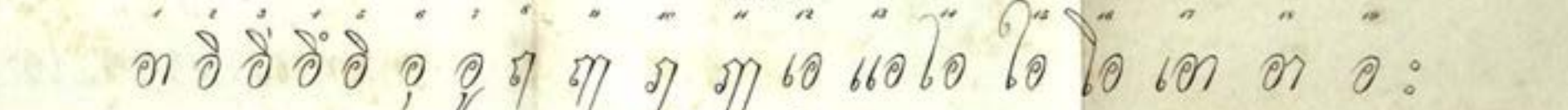
Roman character by the resident Portuguese. In some Alphabets which I have seen, there are five additional vowels and diphthongs, forming combinations, however, which it would be difficult to express in Roman characters. It is to be observed, that all the vowels in the Siamese Alphabet, with the exception of the short a, are rather orthographic marks than distinct characters. They cannot therefore be written except in combination with that letter or a consonant.

SIAMESE ALPHABET.

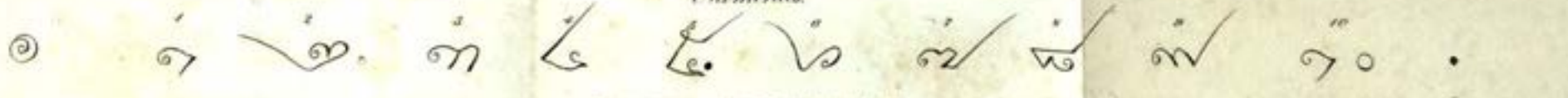
Consonants.



Vowels.

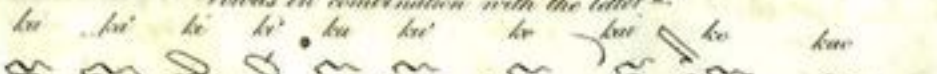


Numerals.

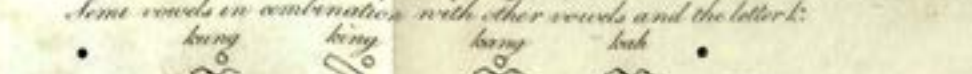


PALI ALPHABET.

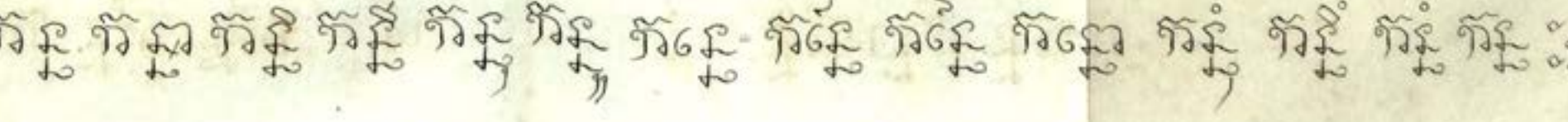
Vowels in combination with the letter k:



Semi vowels in combination with other vowels and the letter k:



Combinations of Vowels and Consonants



Pubd. by W. Oliphant, London, 1828.

MON OR PEGU ALPHABET.

k kh g gh ng ch chh j jh nya t th d dh n t th d dh n

p ph b bh m y r l w s h l ng

LAO ALPHABET, as Written at Chantanaburi or Lanchang.

k kh g gh ng ch chh j jh nya t th d dh n t th d dh n

p ph b th m y r l w s h l ng

SPECIMEN OF PALI.

SPECIMEN OF SIAMESE.

Pub. by W. Allen, London, 1839

India, but with considerable modifications, which lead me to believe that the Siamese possessed an original written character at a very early period, and that the present arrangement, in all likelihood, followed the introduction of the worship of Buddha and of the Bali language in times comparatively recent. The character is written from the left hand to the right, like all the original alphabets of the countries lying between Arabia and China. The consonants consist of five classes,—namely, gutturals, palatals, dentals, labials, sibilants and liquids, each class having its own peculiar nasal. In each consonant the short vocalic breathing, "a or o," for sometimes it is pronounced as the one, and sometimes as the other, is always understood, unless the contrary be expressed by an orthographic mark. The character for this is included with the consonants, and is the last letter of the alphabet. The other vowels are but orthographic marks, which, in some cases, are written over or below the consonants, and in others precede or follow them. If a word or syllable begin with a vowel, the character is expressed by affixing the peculiar mark of such vowel to that of the short "a."

Such a variety of intonations as is implied by this account of the Siamese alphabet, seems to be necessary to a language, the great majority of the words of which consists of monosyllables. In this language, and indeed in all that

are kindred to it, the same distinctions of meaning are produced by the alteration or modification of a single letter which are brought about by us through whole syllables, of which a few examples may be given. The monosyllable *klai*, with a short *a*, means *far*, but with the same vowel long, it means *near*. If in the last form of this monosyllable, as it would be written in the Roman character, the fourth letter of the series *k* be substituted for the first, which it is that exists in the words meaning "far" and "near"—then we have an entire new meaning, viz. the adverb *almost*. The following is an example, perhaps, still more striking. A syllable which in Roman letters would admit only of being written *se*, becomes, according as the intonations are varied, the verb to buy—the adjective fit or proper, and "a tiger," "a vest," "a mat." The language, I am told, abounds in examples of this nature.*

The Siamese language is characterised by great simplicity of grammatical structure. It is destitute of inflexions, and hence its construction depends wholly upon the principle of juxtaposition. The nominative precedes the verb, and the verb the noun, which it governs. The

* The remarkable accuracy of pronunciation attained by the Eastern nations, and the copiousness and perfection of their alphabetic systems, afford a striking contrast with the paucity and vagueness of their ideas. It would seem as if they systematically set more value on sound than on sense.

adjective follows the noun which it qualifies. There is no relative pronoun, and no distinction between the pronouns of the second and third persons.

The political slavery of the people is deeply impressed upon their dialect; and hence the existence of a phraseology, and of distinct terms to indicate the relative ranks of the speakers—the one party using a language of flattery and adulation, and the other of command and authority. In our intercourse with the Siamese chiefs, we soon discovered their extraordinary fastidiousness on this subject. They displayed an uncommon repugnance towards making use of the interpreters of the Mission; and, accustomed to the incense of flattery, seemed to be in constant dread, not only of hearing unpleasant truths, but even of the risk of having their ears and dignity offended by the accidental errors in phraseology, of rustic and uncourtly interpretations. The language, I am told, is copious, or rather possesses that species of redundancy which belongs to the dialects of many semi-barbarous nations, and, which shows a long but not an useful cultivation.

The literature of the Siamese is from all accounts meagre and uninteresting; and, in point of imagination, invention, force, or correctness, is much below that of the Arabs, the Persians, or even of the Hindoos. Their efforts

seem scarcely indeed to rise beyond the rank of those of the tribes of the Indian islands; and judging from a few translations of what were said to be their best works, I have no hesitation in pronouncing them singularly puerile and jejune.

Siamese literature is naturally divided into two classes—a profane and a sacred; the one written in the vernacular language, and the other in the Bali. All composition in the vernacular language is metrical, with the exception of ordinary epistolary writing—a fact from which it may be seen, that it is not utility or instruction that is aimed at, but mere amusement; and this, indeed, is a matter openly avowed by the Siamese. A great variety of different measures are said to be in use, and even to be used in the same composition,—the metre being varied so as to adapt itself to the subject which is from time to time introduced.

The style of Siamese composition is simple, and destitute of those strong metaphors and hyperbolical forms of expression which are commonly ascribed to Eastern languages. Brevity is affected by the Siamese in their compositions, but by no means precision or perspicuity; on the contrary, they hint obscurely at, rather than express their full meaning, and to a stranger, at least, superficially examining their language, there appears a studied ambiguity in all their

forms of expression. Their ambition, in fact, is to mystify their ideas. I was told that our downright, plain, and unmasked style, either in speaking or writing, was viewed by them as harsh, rustic, and undignified. This style is of course derived from the manners and habits of the people.

Siamese compositions consist of songs, romances, and a few histories, or chronicles. The first are usually in the form of a dialogue between persons of opposite sexes, in which quaint allusions are made, amusing to those who are intimately acquainted with the idiom of the language. The usual subject of them is love, or, more correctly, intrigue. Some of them that are sung in public, are said to be highly licentious; while their recitation is accompanied by gestures which set modesty at defiance. Many of these were sung in our hearing, during the festivities which accompanied the tonsure of the Phraklang's son; and, as already mentioned, were followed by or alternated with the incantations of the Brahmins, the hymns of the Talapoins, the feats of tumblers and dancers, profane music, and dramatic exhibitions.

The romances are stated to be upon an equality with the other efforts of the Siamese intellect, destitute of ingenuity, and crowded with extravagant, supernatural, and incredible fictions. The subject is usually the adventures in love

and war of some chief or prince, borrowed from the remote and fabulous history of the country,—the wide-spread legends of the Hindoos, and now and then from Javanese and Malayan story. The history of the Hindu god and hero Rama, is of all others the most favourite topic; and there exists in the Siamese language an extensive composition, comprising all the adventures of this worthy, which they call Ram-kian, —a word which I take to be a corruption of *Ramayana*, the name of the well-known Sanscrit poem. The Siamese story is so voluminous, that it is said to be comprised in four hundred cantos, or parts, and when dramatized, to take up six weeks in acting. Of this I was informed personally by the Phraklang.

The Siamese have no dramatic compositions, —that is to say, no performances containing a regular written dialogue. Their plays are founded on the romances already mentioned, the actors being left to their own wits for converting the subject into a suitable dialogue. A prompter stands by, and refreshes their memories, from time to time, from the written volume which he holds in his hand.

The Siamese are said to have some historical compositions; and it is probable that the dry chronology of their kings, and the leading events of their history for a few centuries, may be told by them with sufficient fidelity; but

it cannot for a moment be imagined that they are capable, any more than other rude people, of writing a rational and connected narrative of their national story. The chiefs with whom I conversed on this subject, appeared either to be very ill-informed, or very little disposed to communicate information. I was told that the only documents of any value existed in the palace, being records of passing events composed by a state chronologist. To these, which are deposited in the public archives, the officers of Government have recourse whenever occasion requires. If I am to judge by the minute care with which the particulars of the conversations held with ourselves on public occasions were taken down by the Government scribes, the records in question ought at least to be very voluminous.

It is to sacred literature only that the Siamese attach any importance. It is this alone which they consider a pursuit meriting any serious attention. The language dedicated to religion in Siam, is the same as in all other Bauddhist countries, the *Bali*, or *Pali*, commonly pronounced in Siam Ba-li, as if it were written in two syllables, agreeably to the monosyllabic idiom of Siamese pronunciation. The Siamese priests also occasionally denominate it *Pasa Makata*, which is only a corruption of *Bahasa Magadha*,—meaning the language of Magadha, or

Bahar, the birth-place of Buddha. The term *Bali* is applied in Siam either to the written character or to the language itself, but most frequently to the latter. It is a little remarkable that the character or alphabet of the Bali is very generally denominated by the Siamese *Kam-kom*, or the writing of Kamboja. Some allege that it is so called because the Siamese are said to have acquired their first knowledge of it, and of the Buddhist religion through Kamboja; but others, with more probability, affirm that it has this name because it is the only character known to the Kambojans, both their religious and popular writings being composed in it. According to the information furnished to me, the Bali language, as it obtains in Ceylon, in Ava, Pegue, Lao, Siam, and Kamboja, is exactly the same; while time and distance have occasioned a considerable diversity in the mode of writing the character. The Bali writings of Siam and Kamboja are identically the same. Those of Pegue, Ava, and Lao, differ a little from each other, and a good deal from the two former. The writing of Ceylon differs very considerably from all the rest. The result of this is, that the writings of the priests of Siam and Kamboja are at once mutually intelligible to each other; that the writings of these, and of the priests of Ava, Pegue, and Lao, may be reciprocally read without any extraordinary diffi-

culty; but that the priests of all these countries encounter considerable difficulty in deciphering a Bali manuscript of Ceylon. The compositions in the Bali language appear to be confined to religious subjects, and the works which exist in Siam do not, from all accounts, differ from such as are current in Ceylon and other Bauddhist countries.

Almost all Bali books, and such works in the popular language as the Siamese put any value on, are written on slips of palm leaf with an iron style, a black powder being thrown over the impression, which is thus rendered sufficiently distinct and legible. These slips are from a foot to a foot and a half long. They are tied up in small bundles, and very generally richly gilt, and painted on the edges, forming thus a volume which is carefully placed in an envelope of silk or cotton cloth. For more ordinary works, as well as for keeping accounts, and taking minutes of public transactions, the Siamese use a thick stiff paper, prepared with a black paste, so as to receive an impression with the stone pencil used in writing upon it, which is a bit of soap or pot-stone. The paper in these cases consists of a strip, ten or twelve cubits long, and about a foot broad, which is folded zig-zag, so as to form pages of about three inches deep. After one side of the whole is filled, the sheet is turned up, and the subject continued upon the reverse.

The writing upon such paper can be expunged, so that the same material may be repeatedly used, in the same way as writing upon a slate with us. The paper on which epistolary correspondence is carried on is a miserable fabric, soft, spongy, and uneven. This also is written upon with a pencil, for ink is a material almost unknown to the Siamese.

As among other Asiatic nations, a smattering of education is very generally diffused among the Siamese,—that is to say, they can read and write awkwardly and imperfectly; but one does not meet amongst them, as in Hindostan, with either dexterous scribes or clever accountants,—almost all their arithmetical calculations especially being made with the assistance of the Chinese *Sanpan*. Their education in the vernacular language, such as it is, appears to be casually acquired, for I could not learn that they had any schools for this special purpose. Some knowledge of the Bali tongue is also very generally disseminated, owing to the singular custom or institution which calls upon every individual of the male sex to devote some portion of his life to the priesthood. Every temple has a considerable library of Bali books, and the chiefs also have their private collection, which they are proud of exhibiting. That of the *Phraklang*, for example, was displayed during the festivity of his son's inauguration into the priesthood, upon an elevated

bench, along with English fowling-pieces, specimens of cut-glass, Chinese porcelain, and similar objects. Of the degree of learning which the Siamese Talapoins possess in comparison with other priests of Buddha, I had no means of forming any judgment. Symes and Buchanan seem to consider it as an acknowledged point, that the Siamese are more learned than the Burmans and Peguans, and the Siamese themselves are by no means backward in making such a claim. Whether however from real inferiority, or from respect to the classic land of Ceylon, they are ready to acknowledge their inferiority to the Cingalese. Of the Sanscrit language the priests of Siam know nothing but by reputation, and no one could even be found at Bangkok who could read or write the Dewanagree character. The Talapoins informed me that they had neither a grammar nor dictionary of the Bali, and that their acquisition of the language was consequently attended with much labour and difficulty.

After these observations on the language and literature of the Siamese, I shall take the present opportunity of offering a few remarks on the affinity subsisting between the races of men which inhabit the wide regions between Bengal and China;—rejecting, however, the Anam nation, which, owing to vicinity and frequent subjugation to China, has stamped upon it to so great

a degree the type of the Chinese character, as necessarily to be separated from the rest of the group, although in all probability originally belonging to it. The most civilized and leading nations within this wide range are the Burmans, the Siamese, and the Peguans. Next to them come the people of Kamboja, Lao, and Aracan. those of Cassay, Champa, Cachar, and Assam, constitute a third order; and then we have a number of petty races, in a savage or half savage state,—such as the Kyen, Karian, Law'a, K'ha, Chong, Moi, &c. &c.

The dialects of these nations bear each other a common resemblance in structure and in idiom. They have borrowed much from each other, yet appear radically distinct. The foreign tongues of which words are found most extensively intermixed with them, are the Sanscrit, or rather Bali, and the dialect of the Chinese province of Canton, but the influence even of these appears to be merely extrinsic.

In treating of the principal nations now referred to, an important and interesting fact will soon present itself, viz. the striking accordance which they offer in all essential points amongst themselves, and their no less obvious dissimilitude to all other Asiatic races. They possess the same physical configuration; their languages radically agree in structure and idiom; and their manners, habits, and usages, are alike. This pa-

rallel may, without any violence, be extended to such matters as are little better than arbitrary or accidental. Thus, one form of religion, with scarcely a shade of difference, pervades all those that are civilized; they have the same literature, the same laws, and the same civil and political institutions. It may farther be observed, that the history and revolutions of this group of nations have been confined to themselves;—that their social state has been very little influenced by strangers; and that judging from the evidence of language, and the absence of historical monuments to prove otherwise, they appear never to have been subjected to foreign conquest,—an immunity, if it be one, which they owe to the strong natural barriers which have arrested the tide of conquest as well as civilization to the east, the west, and the north. The great geographical distance, and the trackless and impracticable wildernesses, which divide them from Tartary, have secured them from being overrun and subjugated by the invasions of the nomadic tribes of the north. It is to similar causes they owe their independence of the Chinese. The only external agencies which seem to have made a lasting impression upon them, are religion and commerce, but especially the former. While secured, however, from foreign aggression, their own history, from all that is known of it to Europeans, has presented a constant scene of internal warfare,

and of alternations of conquest and subjection; in the course of which, the three most numerous and civilized tribes have taken the lead, viz. the Burmans, Peguans, and Siamese; while the secondary nations, such as those of Aracan, Lao, and Kamboja, with the less civilized tribes, have stood neuter when permitted, or followed the fortunes of the temporary victor.

In drawing the character of the Siamese, it cannot be denied but that the dark greatly overbalances the bright side. Judging from those with whom we held intercourse, I make no hesitation in confirming what has been often asserted of the Siamese by European writers, that they are servile, rapacious, slothful, disingenuous, pusillanimous, and extravagantly vain.

Servility is of course to be expected as a necessary consequence of the rigid despotism by which the Siamese are weighed down. Subordination of rank is so rigorously marked in Siam, as to destroy all appearance of equality, and therefore all true politeness. Towards their superiors, the conduct of the Siamese is abject in the extreme, and towards inferiors it is insolent or disdainful. This character seems indeed impressed even upon their external deportment. Their gait is not only never graceful, erect, or manly, like that of the military tribes of Western Asia, but on the contrary, always sluggish, ignoble, and crouching. Perhaps the very attitudes in which sub-

mission to superiors is expressed, contributes to banish even the graces of external deportment; and it seems indeed impossible to associate any elegance of external manners, however superficial, with the habitual practice of crawling upon knees and elbows, knocking the forehead against the earth, and similar observances.* The universal disuse of wearing arms in Siam by the authority of the Government, and the substitution, if not of law, at least of arbitrary authority, for the private right of avenging wrongs, has in all probability a considerable effect upon the manners of the Siamese, rendering their demeanour less guarded and delicate than in conditions of society even less civilized, but where the habitual use of arms and the consequent fear of assassination beget a constrained politeness, and a fastidious impatience of affront and insult.

All the persons with whom the Mission had any intercourse displayed a singular share of rapacity, scarcely attempted to be disguised by

* We had occasion to observe on the knees and elbows of some of our acquaintances the effects of this practice, in the black indelible scars with which they were marked. The effects of these repeated prostrations were particularly obvious on the limbs of the Phraklang, whose duty led him, at least twice a day, to perform them at the palace. The Chinese, I believe, are allowed on such occasions the use of pads for the protection of their limbs and garments; but such precaution on the part of the Siamese would be looked upon as intolerably disrespectful, and deserving of the bamboo.

the thinnest veil of decorum. They asked without scruple for whatever there was the least chance of their obtaining, and were neither offended nor repelled by a refusal. The lower orders in this respect imitated their superiors, and never scrupled to beg for whatever struck their fancy. In our walks through the villages in the vicinity of Bangkok, we were frequently importuned for our pencil-cases, seals, watches, pocket handkerchiefs and neckcloths. One modest matron asked one of our gentlemen for his coat. He pointed out, as well as he could, that it would be inconvenient to return home without it. Not repelled by this objection, she pointed to his shirt and waistcoat, informing him that these would be sufficient for so short a journey as he had to perform!

We found the chiefs, at least, as slow to give as they were ready to ask; and the Court especially, both in its intercourse with foreign nations and with strangers, exhibits the utmost paltryness in this respect. Any presents are received, however trifling, and a show is made of conferring a favour by making a return,—care being always taken, however, that a gain of thirty or forty per cent. shall be made by the transaction. Certainly not a vestige is to be found among the Siamese of the munificent liberality or prodigality which is so frequently

met with among the chiefs and princes of Western Asia. All their bounty appears to be bestowed upon the Talapoins, and it seems as if they had no room for the exercise of liberality or charity in any other form.

The Siamese appeared to us to exhibit in great perfection the indolence, disinclination to labour, contempt for the value of time, and disregard of punctuality which are always so characteristic of the subjects of a bad and barbarous government. In point of candour and sincerity, their character is eminently defective; and the impression left on our minds, from our intercourse with persons about the Court, was, that they had no conception of the advantages of a manly, direct, and upright conduct, and that they practised dissimulation and artifice to as great an extent as the natives of Hindostan, although not with one-half their dexterity. We found, indeed, no reason to dissent in this respect from the opinion which the Abbé Gervaise expressed of them near a century and a half ago,—that they were universally given to dissimulation, and that although "as enemies they were not dangerous, as friends they could never be relied upon."

I make no question, from the little we saw of the Siamese, that they are generally destitute of personal courage. Cowed by the worst political institutions, and deprived of the liberty of

wearing arms, the use of which, even under arbitrary governments, preserves to the individual some share of self-respect, and habitually accustomed to the infliction of the lash, it would be strange, indeed, if it were otherwise. La Loubere insists that "the determined air of a single European, with a cane in his hand, is enough to make a score of them forget the most positive orders of their superiors;" and this is saying every thing of a people accustomed, under ordinary circumstances, to yield their leaders the most implicit obedience.

The most distinctive features of the character of the Siamese, as well as the most unreasonable and unaccountable, is their national vanity. It is no exaggerated description of the excess of this folly, which is given by the Abbé Gervaise, when he says, that "they commonly despise other nations, and are persuaded that the greatest injustice in the world is done to them when their pre-eminence is disputed." During our residence in Siam, we could obtain, neither by intreaty nor promise of reward, the services of the lowest of the people for menial purposes. On the day on which we were presented at court, it was made a matter of special favour to grant us a few bearers to carry our palanquins or litters, and it was with great difficulty that we afterwards obtained, and at exorbitant prices, a few rowers for our boats. The lowest peasant considers him-

self superior to the proudest and most elevated subject of any other country. They speak openly of themselves and their country as models of perfection; and the dress, manners, customs, features, and gait of strangers, are to them objects of ridicule. It is difficult to account for so great an excess of weakness and delusion, but no doubt the general causes are their ignorance of the world beyond themselves, their seeing no strangers but such as come to supplicate their government for favours, and the dominion and superiority which they have immemorially exercised over the barbarous and inferior tribes which immediately surround them. From whatever cause it arises, there can be no question but that the Siamese, ignorant as they are in arts and arms, —without individual or national superiority,— half naked and enslaved, are yet the vainest people in the East.

The virtues of a Siamese are all of a negative complexion, and the catalogue of them is brief. They are generally temperate and abstemious; placable, peaceable, and obedient. The temperance of such a people is in all probability the joint result of climate, constitution, and necessity. Religion prescribes a vegetable diet, and as the slaughter of animals is forbidden, one might expect to find that animal food would be scrupulously rejected, as with the most rigid of the Hindoo castes. But this is far from being the

case; for they use indiscriminately every sort of flesh, not rejecting from their diet such loathsome objects as dogs, cats, rats, lizards, &c. provided always that they have had no hand in the death, and that there be a plea for placing the sin at the door of another. The same is the case in respect to wine and intoxicating drugs, which are strictly prohibited by their religion, and the inhibition enforced by the civil power. A strong passion for the use of ardent spirits appeared to us notwithstanding to be nowhere more general, and no present which we could make to the lower classes, was more acceptable than a supply of ardent spirits, for which we were secretly importuned whenever an occasion offered. We saw, however, no excesses, and heard of none, and I am convinced that the Siamese are, upon the whole, a moderate and temperate people, although, at the same time, impure and indiscriminate in their diet, and uncleanly in their persons.

The Siamese are favourably distinguished from their neighbours, the Malays, and other inferior tribes of the Eastern Islands, by the absence of that implacable spirit of revenge which forms so prominent a feature in the character of the latter. A Siamese, when wronged, seeks redress through his chief, and never attempts to retaliate with his own hand. Acts of desperation similar to the mucks committed by the Malays, are

never heard of amongst them, nor is the tranquillity of the country disturbed by private feuds and animosities, as among more warlike and turbulent barbarians. The same spirit of forbearance, however, is by no means observed towards the public enemy, and their wars are conducted with odious ferocity. Prisoners of rank are commonly decapitated, and those of the lower orders condemned to perpetual slavery, and labour in chains. The peasantry of an invaded country armed or unarmed, men, women, and children, are indiscriminately carried off into captivity, and the seizure of these unfortunate persons appears to be the principal object of the periodical incursions which are made into an enemy's territory.

The peaceable and obedient habits of the people are sufficiently indicated by the security of life and property which exists in Siam, and are, at least, some compensation for the despotism to which they certainly owe their origin. A traveller accustomed to the insecurity and lawlessness which prevail to so great an extent in many other countries of Asia, reposes with some confidence and satisfaction in the security which he finds, at least at the capital of Siam and its neighbourhood. We walked for miles unarmed and unattended in the vicinity of Bangkok without receiving insult or offence from any one, and never for a moment suspected danger to

our persons or property. I feel convinced that the property of a merchant or other stranger visiting Siam, is as secure from treachery or violence at Bangkok, either through the act of the government or of private individuals, as it would be in the best regulated city in Europe.

In domestic life the character exhibited by the Siamese is, under all circumstances, commendable. Parental affection is strong, and perhaps too indulgent, and filial duty is prescribed even by the sanctions of religion, nor did we hear of any barbarous or revolting usages tending to impair the force of these ties. The Siamese women are not immured as in many other Asiatic countries, nor rigorously excluded from the society of strangers of the other sex. The numerous wives of the Phraklang were in the habit of passing and repassing our dwelling unveiled, and without any attempt at concealment. On the river we often met large parties of females belonging to the families of the King and princes, sitting under canopies in their barges. On such occasions they drew aside the curtains to satisfy their curiosity, and afforded us an ample opportunity of gratifying ours in return, for concealment was by no means their object. Notwithstanding these outward appearances, women are far from being treated with respect, but on the contrary are viewed, as in other barbarous countries, as beings of a lower

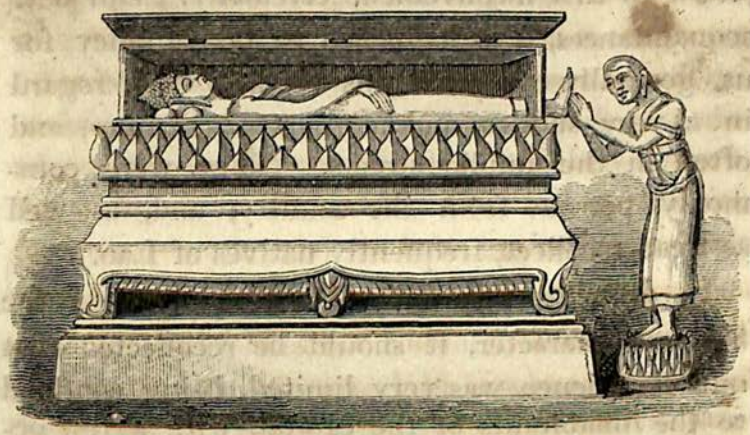
order. It is but justice, however, to state, that we never saw them subjected to any species of brutality or ill treatment. The severe toil which they are compelled to undergo, for they perform every description of outdoor and field labour, such as carrying burdens, rowing, ploughing, sowing and harrowing, cannot fairly be quoted as examples of ill treatment towards them, for these labours fall naturally to their share, and are the necessary consequences of the conscription, which calls the men from their natural employments to the worthless and unprofitable drudgery of the State. As far as we could judge, the Siamese set no very high value on female virtue. The women, however, are not profligate, and at Bangkok they value themselves upon their chastity when compared with the Burman, Peguan, and Cochin Chinese women, who furnish the greater number of public prostitutes, a class sufficiently numerous. Divorces are frequent, being granted without difficulty, and on slight occasions. The punishment of adultery is not heavy, being a pecuniary fine, varying according to the rank and wealth of the offender from two catties of silver (twenty pounds) to six catties (sixty pounds), or the substitution of imprisonment and the bamboo when the mulct is not forthcoming. Polygamy is allowed by the law and religion of the country, and the rich indulge in it to the extent of their ability.

When we were in Siam, his Majesty the King had three hundred wives, of one description or another; and the Phraklang forty. The indulgence, however, is far from common, being of necessity limited by the small number of individuals, in any state of society, capable of maintaining more than one family. "When I was in the country," says the Abbé Gervaise, with much good sense, "they would have me to believe that the lower orders were chaste through virtue, because polygamy was not common amongst them; but, for my own part, I have always believed that it was not so, because the object was to save the expense of supporting many wives."

The Siamese are a ceremonious people, attaching, like most other Oriental nations, an undue and ridiculous importance to mere form and ceremonial, breaches of which are rather considered in the light of political crimes than offences against mere etiquette. A Siamese seldom stands or walks erect; and an inferior never does so in the presence of a superior. In the latter relation, the crouching attitude, as I have already described it, is the most frequent of all. The tenderest embrace between equals consists, as the language expresses it, in "smelling" the object of affection. This practice is common to them and many of the Indian islanders. Hugging is another practice frequent among friends, or where a profession of friendship is made. There was

not one of our own party, during our stay in Siam, who, at one time or another, was not subjected to this inconvenient ceremony. Our new acquaintances, who happened to take a fancy for us, generally conferred this mark of their regard in a very sudden and unexpected manner, and often in the public streets. They were commonly persons from the country, and, as well as I can recollect, frequently natives of Lao.

In drawing this unfavourable picture of the Siamese character, it should be recollected that our experience was very limited, being confined to the inhabitants of the capital, with a few occasional strangers. I was assured, on what I considered good authority, that the character of the provincial inhabitants is much more favourable.



Gautama represented dead, with one of his disciples worshipping him.

CHAPTER II.

Buddhist religion.—Its doctrines and precepts.—Duties of the Talapoins.—History of the Buddhist religion.—Its effects on the character and manners of the people.—Government.—Attributes of the King.—Siamese nobility.—Division of the people and conscription.—Administration.—Revenue.—Arms and Insignia.—Law.—Written Code.—Evidence.—Contracts.—Inheritance.—Marriages.—Military force.

THE worship of Buddha is nearly universal in the countries lying between Bengal and Cochin China. In its doctrine, practice, and morality, it is the same religion that prevails in the island of Ceylon, but appears materially to differ from the Buddhism of Tartary, Hindostan, China, Japan, and Anam, as will appear

by the following short sketch of it. The leading doctrine of the religion of Buddha is that of the transmigration of souls. Its followers believe in a kind of immortality of the soul, and in the doctrine of rewards and punishments after death: they are of opinion, that after a suitable number of transmigrations, and the practice of the requisite virtues in each state, the souls of good men, after being received into a succession of heavens, will be at length admitted into a state of perfect felicity. This state, in which men are no longer born and no longer die, and are emancipated from the cares and passions of all other conditions of existence, is called in the popular language Ni-ri-pan, which is, I understand, a corruption of the Pali word Pari-ni-pan, meaning "all extinguished." This is the abode of many worthies, whose histories are commemorated in Siamese legend, and Gautama himself occupies the highest place in it. The heavens and hells of the Siamese creed are numerous, but the exact number is not agreed upon. A well-informed Siamese assured me, that the number of heavens was twenty-two, of which six were superior and sixteen inferior; but he stated that the places of punishment amounted only to eight. The Siamese do not believe in one Supreme God, the Creator and Director of the Universe. It is not even easy to make them comprehend the abstract and refined notions of a Supreme Di-

vinity. Prah-Pak-krom, the superior of the Phraklang's temple, conversing with me on this subject, said, there was no one greater than Gautama, and that even his power would expire in about five thousand years. They say, that the world was created by chance—that it will be destroyed—reproduced, and destroyed again, without end. They admit the existence of tutelary gods, and every spot has its own guardian divinity; but these personages are of very inferior rank or power. They neither worship nor believe in the gods of the Hindoo Pantheon. They consider these as heroes, kings, and conquerors, and make them the subjects of their romances, their dramas, and their legends. They even exhibit them as paintings and sculptures upon the walls of their temples, but this affords no proof of their worshipping them; for they exhibit, in the same situations, representations of Europeans, of Persians, of Chinese, and other strangers, without intending them as any thing else than mere decorations of the buildings. A person of good sense told me distinctly, that the Hindoo deities had been mere men like ourselves, and translated to heaven for great and good deeds. The Minister Suri-wung-Kosa said, without scruple, in conversation upon the subject, that the story of Rama was "full of falsehoods." The King of Siam, to whom Louis XIV. sent two missions, and to

whom he made the indiscreet proposal of changing his religion, had no scruple, while he firmly rejected that proposal, to hang up in a distinguished part of his palace a portrait of Christ and the Virgin, which he had received as a present from his Holiness the Pope. It is obviously their indifference and want of zeal which leads the Siamese into this course.

The moral precepts of the Siamese are contained in the following ten Commandments:—1. Do not slay animals. 2. Do not steal. 3. Do not commit adultery. 4. Do not tell lies, or backbite. 5. Do not drink wine. 6. Do not eat after twelve o'clock. 7. Do not frequent plays or public spectacles, or listen to music. 8. Do not use perfumes, or wear flowers or other personal ornaments. 9. Do not sleep or recline upon a couch that is above one cubit high. 10. Do not borrow or be in debt.—The first five of these precepts are applicable to all mankind, but the rest imperative only on the Talapoins. With the exception of one or two of these axioms, founded on the inevitable and universal principles of natural ethics, they are either frivolous or ridiculous; and the very first on the list, when contrasted with their practice, goes far to justify the censure passed upon the Siamese by La Loubere, that they have "a greater horror of shedding blood than of committing murder."

A strict observance of religious duties is ex-

pected only from the priests. The laity, if they pay the customary honours to the Talapoins, bestow daily alms upon them, make them gifts, observe the usual holidays, visit the temples, and if rich, endow temples and monasteries, imagine they perform every necessary duty of their situation, and delegate all spiritual concerns to the priesthood, who, on their part, are commanded to abstain from all temporal occupations whatsoever.

Religion is a great business of life in Siam, and even the principal source of recreation and amusement. Every male in the kingdom must, at one period or another of his life, enter the priesthood, for however short a time. Even the King will be a priest for two or three days, going about for alms, like the rest, and the highest officers of the Government will continue in the priesthood for some months. This step, in short, seems to be looked upon as a sort of necessary spiritual confirmation. A man may enter the priesthood at whatever age he pleases, and also quit it whenever he is disposed. If a married man, however, he must previously obtain a divorce, and make an arrangement for the maintenance of his family. If after entering the priesthood he quit it, and enter a second time, then he must continue in the order for life. The usual age of entering the priesthood, is that of puberty; but it is common to enter at all

ages, from this to twenty-one. I have described the ceremonies of ordination in another place, which consist of the tonsure of the party—ablutions—long prayers from the Talapoins—processions—feasting, and the distribution of largesses to the priests and the poor, but chiefly to the former.

The season for entering the priesthood, is the sixth, seventh, and eighth months of the year; and that for quitting it, the eleventh month. It happens, therefore, that from the eighth to the eleventh month the number of priests is very great; but from the eleventh to the sixth and seventh, it is much smaller; for many, after making a short experiment of the monastic life, are, notwithstanding its immunities and distinctions, glad to return to the world, with all its ordinary cares and troubles, and the thousands superadded to it in Siam by a bad and tyrannical Government.

The priests live together in monasteries, containing from ten to several hundred Talapoins. The monasteries are always attached to a temple, and consist of a regular series of cells on its outskirts, generally encompassing one or more angles of the building. The Talapoins in Siam are divided into six grades. When they first enter the order, they are denominated Nen, that is, noviciates or scholars, and are promoted to higher ranks, according to their learning and standing.

Every monastery is under the direction of a superior or abbot, and the larger ones have also a prior. Under the direction of these dignitaries, a regular system of subordination and discipline is maintained. The superiors, however, can exercise no magisterial or judicial functions, and inflict no corporal punishment; their authority being confined to exhortation, reproof, or finally to expulsion. Each superior priest within the monastery has his own particular disciples, who pay him the same honours that a Hindoo scholar does to his Guru, or spiritual guide. Whenever they come into his presence, for example, they prostrate themselves before him, touching the earth with their foreheads, as we had frequent opportunities of witnessing. Almost all the education received by the male Siamese children is in this manner bestowed on them in the monasteries. In return, they perform menial services to the priests; but I believe that no very rigid discipline is insisted upon, for I have commonly seen the young idlers loitering about, doing nothing. They are fed in the monastery, as far as voluntary charity and its endowments will afford, and the deficiency is made up by the parents.

The greater number of the temples, with the monasteries attached to them, are endowed by the Government, or by wealthy individuals, under whose immediate protection they are. The pa-

trons, or founders, give from time to time assistance, according to the measure of their piety and liberality, but casual alms and casual gifts form the principal support of the priests. As an example of the assistance given by the Government, it may be mentioned, that the King, besides keeping in repair the temple called that "of the people," makes an annual allowance of two thousand four hundred ticals to the priests and lay attendants.

The Talapoins are enjoined to observe a strict celibacy, to refrain from all temporal occupation, to abstain from the use of wine and intoxicating drugs, and from destroying animal life; while they are required to pass their time in seeking alms, in religious study, meditation, and prayer. Celibacy is one of the injunctions of their order, the most rigidly insisted upon, and by law the punishment of incontinence is death; although I believe, in Siam, it is usually commuted for degradation and expulsion from the order. No young female is to be seen near the temples. A Talapoin ought never to be seen in conversation with a woman, nor, if possible, looking at one. The exclusion from temporal employment is also very strict. A Talapoin can exercise no political or judicial functions. He is also precluded from engaging in trade, or from performing any species of manual labour for hire or reward. Some of the more rigid will not even touch gold or

silver, and none of them can, or at least ought to have money in their possession. The only species of manual labour which I ever saw them perform, was rowing a boat when going in quest of alms, or performing the same office, or carrying a litter for an individual of very high rank of their own order. Even the study of the sciences and liberal arts is forbidden, as partaking too much of the profane business of the world. To betray any curiosity, indeed, respecting most of these things, would be a matter of scandal. The prohibition against the use of vinous and spirituous liquors, and intoxicating drugs, is general among all the followers of Buddha; and at Siam the Government feigns to take considerable pains to enforce it. How the injunction is obeyed by the Talapoins in particular, I could not learn; but to judge from our limited experience, the passion for wine and spirits appeared to be nowhere stronger than amongst the lay Siamese. It is certain that the Government winks at the infringement of the law, and this too in a manner the most discreditable; for a duty on the manufacture and sale of ardent spirits constitutes one of the largest branches of the public revenue. The Talapoins, while they are enjoined to abstain from the use of ardent spirits, wine, and opium, partake freely of tobacco, and the preparation of betel and areca.

The preservation of animal life is a necessary

and essential maxim arising out of the doctrines of the metempsychosis; but in their observance of it, the Talapoins of Siam are inconsistent, if not hypocritical. They care not to what extent they are accessary to the death of any animal, provided they have no immediate hand in it; and will eat of almost any species of animal food whatever, whether the animal have died a natural or a violent death, and this too without asking any questions respecting it. At Bangkok, pork is publicly hawked and cried every morning about the streets and on the river. Knox says, that the most reproachful epithet which the Cingalese applied to the Christians, was "beef-eating slaves." We found the Siamese more liberal. Some little difficulty was made about slaughtering the larger animals; but when once killed, no troublesome questions were put. At the table of the Phraklang, we had abundance of poultry, pork, and beef, of which the Siamese chiefs, admitted to sit down with us, partook heartily. Some one indiscreetly asked how the beef was obtained. The Phraklang evaded the question, and requested the person who put it not to be so curious on such subjects. To this it may be added, that there is probably no country in Asia of the same extent, in which so many wild animals are killed for profit. Fish also forms a considerable article of the food of the people. These, they say, they do not kill,

but only draw out of the water. In war, the excuse is, that they do not aim directly at the enemy, but only fire at them. Any subterfuge, in short, appears to satisfy their easy consciences, and they seem determined to suffer no serious inconvenience from an over rigid adherence to this dogma.

A Talapoin ought to be exempt from all worldly cares, and to busy himself respecting domestic concerns is entirely beneath his dignity. He ought neither to lay in a store of food, nor make any arrangement for preparing it for use. It is this principle which makes begging in a Talapoin honourable. They must not, however, ask for charity, but present themselves at the doors of the laity and expect it in silence as a matter of right, never condescending to thank the donor. They can receive nothing as alms but food or clothing, and the first always ready-dressed.

The day of a Talapoin is passed as follows. At seven in the morning he sallies forth in quest of alms, and at this time the streets and river at Bangkok are so crowded with the priesthood, that they appear to form a very large proportion of the population. Having returned to the monastery, they make their first meal at eight o'clock. They make a second at noon, after which hour, according to their rules, it is unlawful to eat solid food, although liquids are

permitted. The afternoon is spent in study. From five to seven in the evening the Talapoins assemble in the oratory of the monastery, and pray together in a loud and chaunting tone, which may be heard a quarter of a mile off. The beating of a drum announces the conclusion of this part of the ceremony, and of the diurnal duties of a Talapoin.

The other duties of the Talapoins are to read hymns, prayers, and moral discourses to the people in the chapels of the temples, on the 1st, the 8th, the 15th, and the 23rd days of each moon; to ordain priests, to consecrate idols and temples, to assist in solemnizing marriages, and in performing funeral rites. In all these cases, they are relieved from the drudgery and manual labour, whatever it may be—their duties being confined to the reading or repetition of hymns and prayers in the Pali language, unintelligible to the multitude, and most probably not very well understood by themselves. The temporal concerns of the places of worship are, for example, in the hands of secular attendants clad in white, and the ceremonies at funerals are performed by mean persons similarly attired.

The Talapoins, as already mentioned, are divided into six grades, or ranks. Above all is the San-krat, or high priest, who is chosen by the King, and always lives within the walls of the palace. To this person unbounded honours

are paid, not only by the priests themselves, but by the people. No Talapoin is qualified to ordain without a license from him, but otherwise he has no temporal or spiritual authority. Indeed it may be remarked, that there exists no organized system of subordination and discipline among the priests of Gautama in Siam; the King being as much the unlimited head of the Church as he is of the State.

A stranger immediately recognizes the Talapoins by the singularity of their dress and appearance. Instead of being more than half-naked, like the people of every rank and degree, they are always decently and respectably clothed. The dress of a Siamese Talapoin is the same with that of the priests of Buddha in Ava and Ceylon. The colour must always be yellow; the fabric may be either silk or cotton, and the form or fashion is upon one uniform model, not to be deviated from. It consists of four distinct parts, the principal of which flows in an easy drapery over the body. The scrip to receive alms is suspended over the left shoulder by a band of yellow cloth, and must consist of an iron basket covered over with cotton, silk, or woollen stuff, usually of a red colour, and as rich in texture and embroidery as the taste and means of the owner can supply; always, however, to the exclusion of the precious metals. The naked and close-shaved head of the Talapoin has no protec-

tion against the inclemency of the weather, except what is afforded by a small fan held over it with the hand. This article, which is an inseparable part of the dress of a Talapoin, is very commonly made of the leaf of the Palmyra, and hence denominated by the Sanscrit word *Talpat*, from which it may be conjectured that the name Talapoin itself has been borrowed by Europeans. Twice a-month, about the new and full moon, the priests of Gautama shave their heads and eyebrows in token of mortification, and also, according to their own modest statement, lest they might prove too agreeable to the fair sex!

Every Talapoin is considered as the representative of Buddha, or Gautama, on earth; and hence the colour and form of his dress, the moral and religious functions he is expected to perform, the reverence due to him from the laity, and the immunities to which he is entitled from the State. The very name by which they are recognized shows the veneration with which they are considered. This name is *Phra*, a word of the Pali language, which means Lord. As a generic word, and indefinitely, it is applied to them, and to the idols of Buddha in the temples; and definitely, to Gautama, or Buddha, to the King, to the White Elephant, &c.

Secular persons, whatever be their rank, must make an obeisance to a Talapoin in passing or meeting him; and the latter must not return the

salutation, but take this piece of homage as a matter of course. Even parents and aged relations must bow to their children, when the latter have entered the priesthood. A Talapoin cannot be punished by the secular arm for any offence, until first degraded, and any offence offered to him is doubly penal. The temples are viewed as places of refuge for criminals, which ought not to be violated. The Talapoins are exempt from taxation, but, above all, from the conscription, the heaviest burthen which weighs upon the Siamese. These honours and immunities, on the other hand, it must not be forgotten, are paid for at a heavy price, by exclusion from all temporal aggrandizement and occupation—a rigid celibacy, loss of the society of friends and relatives, and a life tedious and monotonous. It consequently happens, therefore, that by far the greater number of the priests, after a few years, or even a few months' stay in the monasteries, return to the body of the people, and form matrimonial connexions. I was assured by a person of intelligence, that there were few or none who, at one period of their lives or another, had not formed such a connexion; so that the old and resident priests consisted of persons who, from chagrin or disgust to the world, had assumed the monastic habit a second time, and who were not then permitted to drop it. The practice of religious austerities and mortifications

is, according to the Buddhist religion, highly meritorious; but these appear by no means to be carried to the same excess and extravagance as among the followers of the Brahminical worship. The mortifications recommended to the Buddhists, consist in retiring, in imitation of Gautama, into the solitude of mountains and forests, for the purposes of a more intense devotion, the practice of which they believe leads to supernatural gifts and endowments. Devotees of this class are not, I am told, very frequent in Siam, and the thing does not appear to be very much in fashion. Down to the end of the seventeenth century, it was the invariable custom for the Talapoins, quitting their temples and convents, to retire into the country at a certain season of the year, and there, in temporary huts, to pass twenty days in severe meditation and prayer. This practice now no longer exists.

The Buddhist religion, like others, enjoins pilgrimages to holy places. The most noted of these are, the alleged foot-marks of Gautama, called Prah-bat, or "the holy foot." There is a celebrated shrine of this description at a place called Patowe, in Lao, on the summit of a hill bordering a lake. There is a second between Pripri and Mergui, but the most celebrated is that *par excellence* called the Prah-bat, about a day's journey to the east of Ayuthia.

It should be noticed, that in Siam there are no monastic institutions appropriated to females. Aged women, however, are permitted to retire to the monasteries, where cells are allotted to them. They have nothing, however, to do with the worship performed in the temples, and are neither honoured nor respected; endeavouring to recommend themselves, and to gain a subsistence by the performance of menial offices to the Talapoins. We seldom visited the temples that we were not importuned for charity by these poor women. In the Siamese language, they are called Lung-ki, and dress in white, like the other secular attendants.

The history of Buddhism, one of the forms of worship which has produced the longest and the most extensive influence upon the destinies and opinions of mankind, has justly excited much interest and curiosity; and I shall therefore relate, in some detail, the few facts in regard to it, which fell under my observation in Siam; premising, that in order to prepare myself for any favourable opportunities of inquiry which might arise, I had been furnished by Mr. Horace Wilson, the enlightened and accomplished Secretary of the Asiatic Society of Calcutta, with a series of learned notes. The reader will be enabled to judge how far the hints which I have collected tend to confirm or correct the opinions of Mr. Wilson; and to put it in his power to come to a fair judg-

ment, I shall begin by transcribing the most material portion of the notes in question.

"The original *Buddha*," says Mr. Wilson, "seems to have been of Scythian or Tartar extraction, and to have existed above one thousand years before Christ. The records of China, as mentioned by M. de Guigne, assign about this date, and call Cashmir the seat of his nativity. The Raja Tarinjini, however, or History of Cashmir, which may, by reasonable inferences, be made to agree tolerably well with the Chinese statement of the date, does not mention where he was born, and connects the prevalence of his religion in Cashmir, with a Tartar, or *Tarushca*, a Turk, or Scythian subjugation of the country. The existence of the Bauddhaic creed in Tartary, may be traced from a very early period to the present day, and is a corroborative proof of its indigenous origin.

"Although, however, the Northern origin of *Buddha* might be easily made out more satisfactorily, the fact is scarcely worth investigating with reference to the present condition of the Buddha faith; there is merely a nominal connexion between them,—the real founder being *Gautama*, the son of *Sudhodana*, a prince of *Magadha*, or Behar, who flourished in the sixth century before Christ, or 542. This personage might have borrowed the anti-vedaic notions of the elder *Buddha*, and the tenderness for ani-

mal life; he was probably, however, instigated very much by animosity towards the Brahmans, as it is a curious part of the history of a religious innovator in India, that he should be a *Chetriya*, or of the military caste.

"Very great confusion has been occasioned in all discussions relating to *Buddha*, by identifying these two persons,—an error originating with the Hindoos themselves, and easily accounted for; the Puranas, the earliest authorities for the accounts of Buddha, being unquestionably some centuries later than *Gautama*. With his history, therefore, their authors were familiar, whilst a faint and imperfect tradition kept alive some recollection of his predecessor. They consequently mixed up the two, and blended, obviously, in a very awkward manner, the *Buddha*, the ninth Avatar of Vishnu, who appeared shortly after CRISHNA, with the Prince of Magadha, the son of *Sudhodan* and *Máyá Devi*.

"For the names and birth-place of *Gautama* we have the authority of all the Hindoo accounts, and their *Magadha* is manifestly the *Mokito* of the Chinese, the Mokokf of the Japanese, and the Macadesa of the Singalese; for the date, we must be content with the foreign notions, the Siamese placing Gautama's birth 544 years before Christ; the Singalese 542; and the Burmans 546; Indian history so far confirming this, as to place the family of Gautama on the throne

of *Magadha* from the seventh century to the third of Christ.

" A very common name of *Gautama* is *Sácya, Śácya Muni,* or *Sácya Sinha,* the *Xakia* of the Archipelago. It generally occurs as a synonyme of *Gautama.* Whether it properly belongs to him may be doubtful. The term *Buddha* is a generic one—it might have been a proper name once, but it has since become an epithet; and instead of calling Gautama Buddha, we should be quite right in calling him *a* Buddha. A *Prácrit* vocabulary, brought by a Burman priest to Calcutta, and which seems to be little more than a translation of the *Amera Cosha,* opens with a string of thirty generic names, the first of which is *Buddha.* Several others are familiar, as *Sugata, Dhermarája, Magavar, Na'th,* &c. They might be rendered,—The Wise—The Virtuous—The King of Justice—The Lord—The Master. Then come the synonymes of *the* Buddha, commencing oddly enough with *Jina;* the rest are *Sácya, Siddhanta, Saudhodini, Gautama, Sácya Sinha, Sácya Muni,* and *Aditya Bandhu.* They certainly are all applied to one person. But there were more than one preeminent Buddhas; the Singalese enumerate five, of whom the fifth, Maitréya, is yet to come. The vocabulary of *Hémachandra* names seven—*Vipaswi, Sic'hi, Viswabhu, Cratuch handa, Canchana, Cásyapa;* and the seventh, as usual, *Sácyasinha,* &c. The Bur-

man priest alluded to above, asserted there were twenty-eight Buddhas. Hamilton, in his Nepal, separates *Gautama* from *Sácyasinha*, calling the former the fourth, the latter the fifth *Buddha*, and stating this last to have lived in the first century of the Christian era. There is so far particular reason to think this not impossible, that there seems to have been a new source of confusion introduced into the history of *Buddha*, by blending him again with a different person, or with *Sálivahana*, as in the *Aji Saka* of the Japanese; and the stories of Devatat and Devadatta, the enemy of *Sácya*, or *Salivahana*.—Now, quere, whether this confusion may not all be resolved into the various senses of the word *Sácya*, which is a regular derivative from *Sáca*, meaning a *pot-herb* or an *era*; or from *Sáca*, a native of a country, the position of which is unknown, but identified etymologically with that of the *Sacæ*, or Scythians? Now the Sanscrit etymologists have abandoned the explanation of the term *Sácya*, merely making it a grammatical formative from the root *Sac*, to be able or powerful. As there was no authority for its import, conjecture was at liberty to explain it, and hence the confusion. *Sácya* may therefore be applicable to any *Buddha*, as to one who confines himself to vegetable food. It is applicable to *Salivahana*, the institutor of the era, the Saca still in use; whilst

as a specific term it seems to be a foreign one, and to confirm my views of the Scythian origin of the faith. There being no satisfactory Sanscrit explanation of it, except as an attribute, is rather in favour of this notion. The addition of *Sinha* and *Muni* only imply preeminence. Hence *Sacya sinha* is explained by Sanscrit writers to be the chief of the *Sacyas;* but they do not tell us, at least satisfactorily, who the *Sacyas* were. I am rather disposed to think that the name is the lawful property of the first *Buddha,* erroneously given to *Gautama:* it may also belong to *Salivahana,* but in a sense quite unconnected with the Buddha religion.

"The next question is, at what period was the Buddha religion conveyed to the East and South. According to the Chinese, it came through Tibet to China in the days of Buddha or Fo himself, one thousand years before the Christian era; this might have been the case, but the present faith was of much later introduction. *De Guigne* says, about sixty years after Christ. It was introduced into Ceylon somewhere between A. D. 250 and 405.—A fresh batch of it was carried to China by *Dherma,* who fled thither in A. D. 519. Thence it reached Japan, Tonquin, and Cochin China in 540, and Corea in 543. It seems to have got to Siam and Laos at a very early period. Marshman supposes three or four centuries before Christ. In that case, however,

it seems strange that it should have reached the Burman empire only about six centuries ago, according to Buchanan. The most flourishing period of the Buddha faith to the eastward, and that in which it assumed its present form, extends, no doubt, from the commencement of the Christian era, to the tenth century, during which, we learn, from *De Guigne* and *Morrison*, a very active intercourse, much of which was of a religious character, subsisted between India and China. The latter mentions that in the year 950, three hundred priests were sent to India, to procure relics of Fo, and books of the Bauddhas.

"If this intercourse subsisted from a very early period, what are we to understand from the new impulse given to the Bauddha faith in China by the arrival of *Dherma* so late as 519? Was that event connected with the persecution of the Buddhas in Hindostan? I have had occasion to express an opinion to this effect in the Preface to my Sanscrit Dictionary, and have inferred, from various authorities, that although the Bauddha sect was by no means annihilated in India much earlier than the thirteenth century, yet that was assailed at a very early period, and completely humbled, by the Brahmans and their followers about the fifth and sixth centuries of the Christian era. The suppression of a widely extended sect could not be the work of a moment; and it is more extraordinary that it should

have ever been so thoroughly eradicated, than that it should have long resisted, and occasionally triumphed, over the assaults of its enemies. There were, no doubt, periods at which it suffered occasional humiliation, and the beginning of the sixth century might have been one of these,—the consequence of which was so large a transfer to the eastward, of Buddha sectaries and teachers, as to engross the religious faith of the native population.

"As the fate of the Bauddha religion is a problem of great interest in the history of India, all information calculated to confirm or correct the above views will be very valuable. Some may, perhaps, be obtained from the East; but we have no reason to expect much satisfactory matter, if we may judge by that which Ceylon has afforded. There may be some books peculiar to the countries from which something may be gleaned; and I am told that the Burmans have a work in Magadhi, called the *Buddha Bansa*, or Buddha-race, which may contain some information. The general ideas of the Buddhas, or religious matters, have been made tolerably familiar by the Essay of Buchanan. Of their literature we know little or nothing, but there is no doubt that the sacred branch of it is infinitely voluminous.

"The sacred language of all the *Buddha* countries is *Gautama's* vernacular tongue, the *Mágadhí*, or dialect of *Magadh*, or Behar. From the speci-

mens I have seen, it differs in no respect from the *Mágadhí*, or *Pracrit*, found in Sanscrit books, especially the *Nátacs*, or Plays. It differs only from Sanscrit in enunciation, being more lisping and effeminate, omitting nasals and liquefying rough and harsh sounds. Thus it calls *Sacya sinha, Saca seeha; Nara sinha, Naraseeha; Dherma raja, Dhemma raja; Gautama, Gotama; A'ditya, A'dichcha; Munindra, Muninda; Bhagavân, Bhagava;* &c. If I am rightly informed, it is a misnomer to call this language *Pali*, the *Pali* being the name of the character in which it is written—*Mágadhî*, or *Pracrit*, that of the language, corresponding, in fact, to the terms *Nágarí* and *Sanscrit*. In this way, *Pali* may have a meaning, being the writing of the *Palli*, or villages, whilst *Nágarí* is that of the *Nagar*, or city, in the same manner that *Pracrit* is a rustic or common, and *Sancrit* a perfect or polished tongue. Whether this be the case or not, there can be no doubt that Buchanan was misinformed as to the *Pali* or *Mágadhí* of Ceylon, Siam, and the Burman empire being different. It is not unfrequently written in the common characters of each country, and hence, perhaps, the mistake.*

"The ground-work of the Bauddha literature is Sanscrit, much translated directly there is no doubt; as for example, the vocabulary I have

* This is the case in Ava, but not in Siam.—A.

mentioned above. They have also the code of Menu amongst them, and we know that the Hindoo legends and fables are spread throughout the Archipelago. They have, however, a mass of literature of their own. Those books read by the Rahans, and comprising the duties of devotees—men, and gods, have been named to me as the Vinaya Pitácam, Sutantra Pitácam, and Abhidherma Piticám. Buchanan makes mention of the *Burmas* having many historical works also, which might be worth procuring. It is of little use, however, to bring away the books of the Burman empire, as there are so few who are able to read them. The most valuable works are probably in the *Mágádhí*, a language only intelligible through the medium of the Sanscrit, and presenting to a Sanscrit scholar a stumbling-block in the character in which it is written, as life is not long enough to leave leisure for a perpetual decyphering of handwritings. I should think, therefore, if it is worth while to obtain access to the contents of the Palí books, the readiest method of procuring it would be, to have them copied in the Nagari characters, when they would be legible enough. There are Brahmans to be met with in those regions who might be able to effect this transcript, and even some of the Rahans may perhaps be acquainted with the *Nagari* letters. The same arrangement would be still more desirable for *Mágádhí* books in the

country characters. Works in the language of the country should be suffered to remain in their own shape; as where a language is to be learnt, it is no great matter to learn the letters into the bargain.

"The Bauddhas, according to *Mádhava*, are of four classes:—Madhyámicas, Yogácháras, Sautranticas, and Vaibhháshicas. Other works also mention *Cshapanacas* and *Saugatás* as distinct classes of Bauddhas, though in general they are considered synonymes."

So far the ingenious suggestions of Mr. Wilson, and I proceed now to offer the results of my own enquiries, founded upon them. According to the Siamese, and following their own orthography, Buddha, the founder of their religion, was the son of *Sud-to-ta-ma-Rat* (Sudhdana raja) and *Srimaha-raya-tivi* (Maya devi). The place of his birth was *Kábíla-pat*, in the country of *Mákata* (Magadha). By their account, his death took place in the first year of the sacred era, being the year of the little snake, on Tuesday, being the full moon of the sixth month of the year. The year 1822 was the year 2364 of the era in question; and as Buddha is stated by them to have died when eighty years of age, his birth, by this account, took place 462 years before the Christian era.

The titles, or synonymes of Buddha, as they were given to me in Siam, are as follow:—

Kotamo (Gautama); Sakya-rat, Sakya-sinha, Sakyamuni, Putthá (Buddha); Sukat-ta (Saugata); Sam-ma-racha (Dar màraja); Paka-wà (Bagawan); Nato (Nat'ha); and China (Jina). Somanakotamo, agreeably to the interpretation given to me, means, in the Pali language, the priest Gautama; and Puti-sat is a name of this personage before he entered on his spiritual mission. Of these, by far the most common name is Gautama, corrupted Kotamo. Buddha, corrupted Put-tha, is rarely used. The priests of Siam say, that four great spiritual instructors have made their appearance in the world and died, and that a fifth is expected. The names of the first four are, *Kokosanto, Kona-komano, Katsapo,* and *Kotamo,* and that of the expected one, *Metrayo.*

The Buddhist religion, according to the Siamese priests, was introduced into Ceylon two hundred and thirty-six years after the death of Gautama, or in the two hundred and thirty-sixth year of the sacred era, by Prah-Putha-kosa. From Ceylon, which the Siamese call by the Sanscrit name Langka, Buddhism, according to the same authority, was in the first place introduced into Kamboja, then into Lao, and finally into Siam. The conversion of the Siamese took place in the year 1181 of the sacred era of Siam, corresponding to 639 of the Christian era, under a chief, or king, whose name tradition states to have been Krek, and who, in honour of the event, insti-

tuted the popular era three years thereafter, or in the year 642 of our time. From these notices it will be seen, that the opinions of the Siamese, notwithstanding some considerable discrepancies, agree in all their material features with the judicious conjectures of Mr. Wilson.

The inference to be drawn from all this is, that the Buddhism of Siam has no direct connexion with the worship of that name as it originated in Tartary, of which the Siamese appear to know nothing—that it is derived from the reform or regeneration of that religion, which originated in Magadha, the modern Behar, in the 6th century before the birth of Christ—that from thence, after many centuries, it found its way to Ceylon, and eventually to Kamboja-Lao, and Siam, in the 7th century of the Christian era.

I could not learn that there were any sectaries amongst the Buddhists of Siam, although such are known to exist, or to have existed, in Hindostan. The religion of the country is indeed completely identified with the Government; and those who have had an opportunity of observing the sweeping and all-levelling despotism of Siam, will find it difficult to imagine any one daring to broach a schismatic opinion, or at least any one succeeding in establishing a heresy. There exists, indeed, no religious distinction, save that of clergy and laity; and, above all, it

is of importance to remark, that there is no trace whatever of the institution of the castes, which in the country of the Hindoos exerts so wide an influence over society.*

The French writers of the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th centuries, assert that some of the chiefs and persons of rank entertained religious opinions of a more elevated and philosophical character than those of the people at large; and especially that they believed in the existence of one God, the creator and preserver of the universe. We could not learn that any such refined notions were at present prevalent. In the strange attempt made by Louis XIV. to convert the King of Siam to the Christian religion, the existence of such opinions in this monarch is asserted; but it may be safely averred, that if the Siamese King entertained the refined notions which the French Jesuits ascribe to him, he must have been a remarkable man, and many centuries advanced beyond the bulk of the nation over which he ruled. The history of the transaction deserves to be briefly adverted to, as well on account of its own singularity, as for the light it throws on the character of the Siamese. The French monarch, in his instructions to the Chevalier Chaumont, his ambassador, told him, that the

* I think it not improbable, from what I afterwards found in Ava, that the burners of the dead are a class of outcasts.

conversion of the King of Siam was the main object of his mission; and even in his letter to the Siamese monarch himself, urged his adoption of Christianity. The ambassador, true to his instructions, importuned the Minister Phaulcon upon the subject. The wily Greek, in reply, communicated the following, real or pretended, but, in either case, curious message from his Siamese Majesty.

"But to reply to the Ambassador of France," continued the King, "you will tell him from me, that I feel greatly obliged to his royal master, convinced as I am, from his memorial, of the friendship of His Most Christian Majesty. The honour which this great Prince has conferred upon me is already published throughout the East, and I cannot sufficiently acknowledge such civility. But I am truly grieved that my good friend the King of France should propose to me a thing so difficult, and of which I have no knowledge. I refer to the wisdom of His Most Christian Majesty, to judge of the importance and difficulty of an affair so delicate as that of changing a religion received and followed throughout my kingdom for two thousand two hundred and twenty-nine years.

"At the same time, I am surprised that my good friend the King of France should so strongly interest himself in a matter which regards

God alone; in which God himself takes no interest, and which he leaves entirely to our discretion. For this true God, who has created the heavens and the earth, and all the creatures which we see, and who has given to them natures and dispositions so different, could he not, had he willed it, in giving men bodies and souls of a similar description, inspire them also with an uniformity of sentiment in regard to that religion which they ought to follow, and that worship which was most acceptable to him, ordaining the same religious laws among all nations of the world? Might not this order amongst men, and uniformity in the works of Divine providence, have been introduced with as much ease as the variety which has existed in all ages? Is it not reasonable to believe that the true God takes as much pleasure in being adored by different forms of worship and different ceremonies, as in being glorified by myriads of living creatures who praise him each in his own way? Would the beauty and variety which we admire in the natural order of the universe be less admirable in the spiritual, or less worthy of the wisdom of God? However this may be," concluded the King, "since we know that God is absolute master of the world, and are persuaded that nothing is done contrary to his will, I commit my person and my kingdom to the

arms of Divine mercy and providence, and with all my heart I pray his eternal wisdom to dispose of them according to his good pleasure."

Although, no doubt, the document now referred to contained some of the sentiments of the Siamese King, and of his nation, yet I am inclined to believe the principal part of it must have been a fabrication of the Minister Phaulcon himself; the able, dexterous, and subtle adventurer, who, from a low condition, raised himself to be the Minister and favourite of a foreign sovereign; who, educated in the Greek religion, adopted the Protestant in London, the Catholic in Siam, and who, besides, had been long familiar with all the various forms of worship prevalent in the East.

On the subject of the variety of the religious opinions prevailing over the world, I once asked a Siamese his opinion of the cause, and whether that variety was agreeable to superior intelligences or otherwise. His answer was, that the different sects which existed were all schisms from one true religion; and that the variety of them was pleasing to some superior beings, but displeasing to others, for the Gods were not all of the same way of thinking upon the subject.

There is a person of some celebrity connected with the religious opinions of the Siamese, whom it is necessary to mention. This is Tavitat, alleged to have been a younger brother of Gau-

tama; to have rebelled against him, and, on this account, to have suffered crucifixion along with thieves. Finding some circumstances of resemblance between the history of this person and of Jesus Christ, the Talapoins, according to the Christian Missionaries, insist that they are one and the same; and hence, it is supposed, has arisen one great obstacle to the propagation of Christianity in Siam.

The Buddhists of Siam admit proselytes of all ranks and nations without discrimination, and the Talapoins are vain of making converts. They have not zeal enough, however, to take much trouble on the subject; still less are they disposed to persecute for religious opinions.

I shall conclude these observations with a few remarks on the influence which the Buddhist religion appears to have produced on the Government, manners, and character of the Siamese. There is certainly one unpromising fact which must early occur to any one who inquires into this subject, and it is this,—that all the nations professing that form of worship, and with whom it is the paramount faith, are, among Asiatic nations, of secondary rank only, and that not one of them has ever attained the first rank in arts or arms, or produced individuals known to the world as legislators, writers, warriors, or founders of new forms of worship. This applies not only to the countries lying between the Berhamputr

and river of Kamboja, but to Ceylon, and in some respects to Thibet, and the other Buddhist countries lying to the north of Hindostan. Climate, geographical situation, and physical circumstances, have therefore, in all probability, no agency in this deterioration of character. The abhorrence of shedding blood inculcated in theory by the worship of Buddha has had no influence whatever in elevating and humanizing the character of its votaries; for the history of the Singalese, the Burmans, the Peguans, and Siamese, abounds in acts of the utmost cruelty and ferocity;—in a word, there are no countries in Asia in which human life is held so cheap as in those in which the shedding of blood is considered sacrilege. This, as it appears to me, may in a great measure be ascribed to the institution of the Talapoins. The theocracy of Siam has no effect whatever in restraining or balancing the despotism of the Sovereign, but on the contrary tends in every way to support and confirm it. The Sovereign himself is the real head of the religion of the country. The Talapoins depend upon him for subsistence and promotion. They have neither rank nor endowments independent of his will. They are not hereditary; they have no civil employments; and no tie which unites their interests with those of the people. They may therefore be considered as a kind of standing force, ready at all times

with spiritual arms to enforce obedience to the will of the Sovereign, and to strengthen and aggravate his despotic authority.

The Government of Siam, of which I am next to speak, is as thoroughly despotical, as the absence of all legal restraint with the aid of religion and superstition can well make it. We hear, in other parts of the world, of pious individuals, who do not pronounce the name of the Deity without pausing; but his subjects, it is pretended, cannot pronounce the name of the King of Siam at all. It is certainly never mentioned in writing, and is said to be known only to a very few among his principal courtiers. I think it doubtful, however, whether a King of Siam has in reality any other name than the formidable epithets under which he is usually mentioned. Neither must his health be inquired after, because, however sick or wretched, it must be taken for granted that he is free from bodily infirmities. No heir to the throne is appointed during the lifetime of the King; for to imagine the death of the King is not only in its legal, but in its popular acceptation, high treason. In Siam, indeed, every thing connected with the Government is spoken of only in whispers. In common parlance, the King of Siam is designated by various gentle epithets, among the most frequent of which are, *Phra-penchao-yahuwa*,

" the Sacred Lord of Heads;" *Phra-pinchao-chuit*, " the Sacred Lord of Lives;" and *Kong-luang*, " the Owner of All." The following epithets are also in very general use in regard to him—" Most exalted Lord, infallible, and infinitely powerful." The language of adulation extends to the members of his body. His feet, his hands, even his mouth, nose, and ears, are never mentioned without the word *Phra*, meaning " Lord," or " Sacred Lord," being prefixed. Golden, is another epithet appropriated to whatever belongs, or is attached to his Majesty's person. Thus, to be admitted into the royal presence, is to have reached the golden feet; and whatever comes to his Majesty's knowledge, is said to reach the golden ears.* The following was given to me as a literal translation of the ordinary prelude to all addresses to his Majesty, either in speaking or writing:—" Exalted Lord —Sovereign of many Princes, let the Lord of Lives tread upon his slave's head, who here prostrate, receiving the dust of the golden feet upon the summit of his head, makes known, with all possible humility, that he has something to submit.

* After all, this word " golden," so frequently applied to the monarchs of Siam and Ava, and which appears so absurd and extravagant when literally rendered into European languages, may mean, in the mouth of a Siamese or Burmese, nothing more than "royal" or "preeminent."

A large share of the veneration attached to the person of the King, is derived from the belief that his body is the vehicle of a soul in a highly advanced stage of migration towards a final state of beatitude, rest, or extinction. The bare fact of being a King is considered satisfactory evidence of religious merit and piety in former conditions of existence. In rank, there is no comparison between the Sovereign and the most exalted of his officers or courtiers, and the idiom of the language itself takes care to mark the immeasurable distance which exists between them. This gives rise to forms of expression which appear highly ludicrous to a stranger. The King, for example, will call a young prince, or a young nobleman, dog, or rat, with the incongruous epithets of Royal, Noble, Illustrious, &c.; and these terms, far from being considered as opprobrious, will be received by the young aspirants as expressions of kindness and condescension.*

* Among the many examples of striking resemblance between the state of society in Siam and Ceylon, even in matters purely arbitrary, the custom now alluded to may be quoted as one. "The King," says Knox, "they call by a name that signifies somewhat higher than a man, and next to God. But before the wars, they styled him *Dionanxi*, which is a title higher than God, by the addition of *Nanxi*. This title the King took before the Rebellion; but since, he forbade it. When they speak to the King concerning themselves, they do not speak in the *first person*, and say *I did so or so*, but *Baulagot, the limb of a dog, did it, or will do it*. And when they speak

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The manners of the Siamese Court, and the etiquette observed, seem to be nearly the same at the present day as they are described by the earliest European travellers. The King gives two audiences to his ministers daily, one in the morning and one late at night; asks each of them a few common-place questions respecting his particular department, and decides on the spot on a few easy and trivial cases brought before him. His Majesty passes the rest of the day between the company of his women and that of the Talapoins. The latter pray to or for him; the former occasionally amuse him with reading romances.

With a few trifling exceptions in the provinces, there is no hereditary rank in Siam; no aristocracy of wealth or title; the despotism which reigns over all levelling before it every distinction, and rendering all subservient to its pleasure or caprice. The people seem to be considered as the mere slaves of the Government, and valued only in as far as they minister to the pride and consequence of the Sovereign, or of those to whom he delegates any share of his power. The most important feature of the Sia-

of their children unto the King, they call them *puppies*. As, if he ask them how many children they have, they say so many *puppy dogs*, and so many *puppy bitches*. By which, by the way, we may conjecture at the height of the King, and the slavery of the people under him."—Relation of Ceylon, page 105.

mese Government, is the universal conscription which prevails, and through which the labour and services of the adult male population, whether for ordinary labour, or for military or menial service, are placed at the disposal of the Government. Every male inhabitant of Siam, from the age of twenty-one upwards, is compelled to serve the state for four months in each year. The only exceptions are, the whole of the Talapoins; and the desire to escape from this servitude accounts for the universality of the practice of passing a portion of life in their order;—the whole Chinese population, because they pay a commutation in the form of a poll-tax;—slaves;—all public functionaries, great and small, and every father of a family who has three sons of a serviceable age. An exemption is purchased by a fine of from six to eight ticals a-month, or by furnishing a slave, or other person, not liable to the conscription, as a substitute. In some parts of the country, a commutation is taken in certain of the rude produce peculiar to each province, as sapan-wood, wood of aloes, salt-petre, ivory, and peltry. By the ancient constitution of the country, the forced services amounted to six instead of four months in each year, and are always so represented by the French writers down to the close of the seventeenth century. The important and favourable change, which reduced the period of servitude

from one-half to one-third of the year, is said to have been brought about by the grandfather of the present King, to gain popularity, after his usurpation of the throne by putting to death his predecessor.*

The whole population enrolled for service, as now mentioned, is divided into two equal divisions, called the division of the right-hand and the division of the left. Each of these again is subdivided into bands of thousands, hundreds, and tens, each of which has its own chief, who takes his title from the number of his band; such as *Nai-sip*, (Decurion); *Nairoe*, (Centurion;) *Naipan*, (commander of a thousand, &c.) The grades of title in Siam are nine in number. The first of these in dignity is *Chao*, which may fairly be translated "prince." It is bestowed upon the King's sons and brothers, upon some of the tributary Malay princes, and upon the hereditary governors of some of the distant provinces

Le peuple Siamois est une milice, où châque particulier est enrôlé: ils sont tous soldats, en Siamois *Taban*, et doivent tous six mois de service par an à leur prince. C'est au Prince à les armer, et à leur donner des elephans, ou des chevaux, s'il veut qu'ils servent ou sur des elephans, ou à cheval: mais c'est à eux à s'habiller et à se nourrir. Et comme le Prince n'employe jamais tous ses sujets dans ses armées, et que souvent il ne met point d'armée aux champs, encore même qu'il soit en guerre avec quelqu'un de ses voisins, il employe à tel travail ou à tel service qu'il luy plait, pendant six mois par an, ceux de ses sujets, qu'il n'employe pas à la guerre.—*Description du Royaume de Siam*, par M. de la Loubere, tom. i. p. 237.

of Siam and Lao. *Chao-Pia*, correctly written *Phriá*, is the second title in point of rank, and is bestowed upon some of the principal ministers. The *Phraklang* was raised to this rank during our stay in Siam, having only been of the third order when we first arrived. This third order is *Phriá*, which is given to the deputies or assistants of the principal ministers, and to persons of similar rank. These are followed by the inferior titles of *Luang Khun* and *Muan*, with *Nai-pan*, *Nai-roe*, and *Nai-sip*, already explained.

According to the ancient form of the Siamese Government, the two principal officers of State are the *Kala-hom* and the *Chak-ri*. The *Kala-hom* is considered the chief of the right-hand division of the enrolled population, chief of the military department of the administration, and minister of justice. He has also a superintending jurisdiction over the south-western provinces of the kingdom. The *Chak-ri* is considered the chief of the left-hand division of the enrolled population, minister of the revenue, of the commercial and foreign departments, and he is vested with a general superintendence over the south-eastern provinces of the kingdom.

Under the *Kala-hom* are two great officers, called *Yoma-rat* and *Tar-ma*. The *Yoma-rat* is the chief judge, administering justice personally at the capital, and hearing appeals from the provinces. The *Tar-ma* is governor of the capital,

and mayor, or superintendent, of the palace. Under the *Chak-ri* there are also two great officers, called *P'houlat'hesse* and *P'hra-klang*. The first of these has charge of the department of the land revenue and other internal taxes, and the last of all commercial matters; and hence, as all foreign relations are viewed in a commercial light only, he is minister of foreign affairs. This is the officer whose proper title, meaning Lord of the Warehouses, is corrupted by Europeans into *Barcalon*, and the person best known to all strangers visiting Siam, as with him alone their chief intercourse is conducted.

The capital, with an extensive tract of country in its vicinity, is under the direct jurisdiction of the Government itself; but the distant provinces are administered by a delegated authority, being managed according to their distances or importance by a Governor or Viceroy, and some by their own hereditary or tributary rulers. The four chiefs of Lao, viz. those of Chiang-mai, Lanchang, Pasak, and Luang-prah-bang, with the chiefs of the southern provinces of Ligore and Sungora, may be denominated Viceroys, and have the power of life and death. These are denominated *Chao Muang*, meaning great lords or rulers of their provinces. This title of *Chao Muang* was that which the Siamese Court gave to the Governor-General of British India in their correspondence. The governors of the provinces

nearer to the capital, such as *Pi-si-luk* and *Chanti-bun*, have no power of life and death in their hands, are in all respects invested with an inferior authority, and have only the rank of P'hria. The Malayan tributaries, with the exception of Patani, which is reduced to the condition of a province, are left to the government of their own hereditary rulers, who have the title of P'hria, the King of Queda alone being designated by the higher title of Chao-P'hria.

It is to be observed, that officers in the provinces holding the same titles as those at the Capital, are considered of inferior rank; and that even persons of superior title in the former, when they visit the Court, are bound to acknowledge their subordination to some inferior officers about the Court, by making them the customary obeisance. This distinction arises from the adventitious rank which the mere usage of being admitted into the royal presence is supposed to confer.

There exists occasionally in the Siamese Government an officer of very high rank, called the Wang-na, whose title has been translated by the Portuguese "second King," and whose duties are implied in this version of it. This dignity, it is obvious, corresponds with the Vizier of the Mohammedan Governments of Western Asia. The office did not exist when we were in Siam; but the present King has since re-established it.

Such was the old constitution of the Siamese Government; but the late King introduced a considerable innovation, which is now to be described. Under the high title of Krom, he created four great officers of state, among whom he divided the administration of the kingdom, placing under their authority the ancient officers, *the Kala-hom and Chakri*, with their respective deputies. The four officers thus created are designated *Krom-luang*, *Krom-kun*, *Krom-sak*, and *Krom-chiat*. The first of these superintends the palace, determines all matters that are personal towards the Sovereign, and is the King's confidential counsellor. The second is charged with the judicial branch of the administration, and has a general superintendence over the northern provinces of the kingdom, including Lao. The third is charged with the war department, and has a general jurisdiction over the south-western provinces. The fourth is charged with the commercial and foreign departments, and has a general jurisdiction over the south-eastern provinces, from *Bam-pa-soi* down to the confines of Kamboja and Cochin China. When we were at Siam, this last office was exercised by the eldest illegitimate son of the King, and who afterwards succeeded to, or usurped the crown.

Every public officer in Siam takes, on admission to office, an oath of allegiance, which is afterwards periodically repeated once in every

year. I have seen the formula of this oath, in which all the terrors of religion and superstition are invoked, and in which the party calls down upon himself, should he prove disloyal, every curse and punishment of the present or a future world, naming in detail some of the most horrid and revolting.

The *Revenue* of the Siamese Government is derived from the following sources. A tax on the consumption of spirits, a tax on gaming, a tax on fishing in the Menam, a shop-tax, monopolies, profits on trade, customs, tax on fruit-trees, land-tax, Corvées, a poll-tax on the Chinese, and tributes. Of all these, a short account will be necessary.

A tax on the manufacture and vend of spirits distilled from rice is very general throughout the country. This tax is farmed, and hence its amount has been ascertained with some accuracy, and was stated to me to be for the whole kingdom 460,000 ticals, or 57,500*l.* per annum. The amount of this tax was given to me for the following fourteen towns, which, as our means of obtaining information were so very imperfect, I give in detail with the view of pointing out their relative importance. The tax at Bangkok amounts to 144,000 ticals; at Yuthia, the old capital, to 48,000; at Sohai, to 8,000; at Tachin, to 8,000; at Raheng, to 8,000; at

Kampeng, to 8,000; at Chainat, to 1,600; at Lanchang, the capital of Laos, to 24,000; at Korat, in Lao, to 16,000; at Kanburi, to 1,600; at Champon, to 2,400; at Patyu, to 1,600; at Chaia, to 640; and at Talung, to 2,400.

Gaming is an offence against religion, as well as drinking. The revenue arising from licensing gaming-houses is farmed in the same manner as the tax on the consumption of spirits, and, according to the statement given to me, is at least equal to it in amount.

Killing fish is an offence against religion, not less than taking any other description of animal life, but the payment of a tax is also a sufficient dispensation for incurring this guilt; and the fisheries of the river Menam, with the exception of that part of it which flows near the walls of the palace, are farmed yearly for the sum of 800 catties, or 64,000 ticals, equal in sterling money to 8,000*l.*

The shop-tax is levied on the following rude and summary principle. A dealer in cloth pays four ticals a-year; a dealer in rice, two ticals; a fishmonger, one and a half tical; a vender of tobacco, betel-leaf, and areca-nut, half a tical. Besides these, every boat used as a shop, of which there are many on the Menam, pays yearly, whatever may be the commodity dealt in, two ticals. This tax is also farmed, and its yearly amount at the capital is 64,000 ticals. If

its amount in the provinces bear the same proportion as the tax on spirits and gaming, which is probable, its total amount would be 121,880 ticals, or in sterling money 15,235*l.*

The King of Siam is both a monopolist and a trader: in some cases, claiming an exclusive right to the commodity; in others, exercising only an arbitrary and undue influence, in order to obtain it under the market price; and in a third, receiving it in the shape of a tax or contribution. These are so blended and mixed up with each other, that it is impossible to define their limits. Tin, ivory, cardamums, eagle-wood, gamboge, esculent swallows' nests, the eggs of the green turtle, and sapan-wood, may be viewed as royal monopolies; whilst sugar and pepper are articles which the subject is permitted to deal in,—the Government securing to itself as much of them as it desires at low prices, for which advances are made to the cultivator, labourer, or merchant. To render any full or complete account of these sources of revenue would be impossible, but I shall lay before the reader such notices in regard to them as came under my observation.

Of the first article, tin, 4000 piculs are received into the King's warehouses, worth at Bangkok, at a moderate average, about twenty-seven ticals per picul, making 108,000 ticals. Not more than one-half of this can be considered as a net revenue, after deducting the advance made to

the miners, the charges of superintendence, and the expenses of the distant transport from Junk Ceylon, Talung, and other places where it is obtained. This will amount in sterling money to 6750*l.*

The quantity of ivory delivered to the King is 400 piculs a-year, and as it is given in as a tribute, free of expense, it is nearly a neat revenue, and will amount, at the average of 100 ticals for each picul, to 40,000 ticals, or 5000*l.*

Of the value of the revenue derived from Cardamums, I have not been able to obtain any account; and the same observation applies to Sapan-wood—in bulk, at least, one of the most considerable articles of exportation from Siam. The King's monopoly price of this last commodity is four ticals per picul; but I am unacquainted either with the prices paid to the wood-cutters, or the quantity disposed of at the settled price now quoted.

Eagle-wood, or wood of aloes, is an object of strict monopoly, and 100 piculs of it are delivered annually to the King, free of expense, worth, at an average of its different qualities, 450 ticals per picul, and therefore affording a neat revenue of 45,000 ticals, or 5625*l.*

Four hundred piculs of gamboge are paid to the King as tribute, worth sixty ticals a picul, giving a revenue of 24,000 ticals, or 3000*l.*

From esculent swallows' nests, which consti-

tute an invariable subject of monopoly with the government of every country in which they are found, the Siamese Government derives, I was informed, a revenue of about 100,000 ticals a-year, or 12,500*l.* The eggs of the turtle afford only 5000 ticals, or 625*l.*

According to a statement which the minister, Suri Wung Kosa, furnished me with, 40,000 piculs of pepper are annually paid into the Royal magazines, for which the Government pays to the cultivator eight ticals a picul, besides the charge of conveying it from the east coast of the Gulf, to Bangkok. It sells for twenty. This would probably leave a profit of about ten ticals on each picul, or 400,000 for the whole amount, —50,000*l.*

For sugar of the best quality, the Siamese Government pays to the manufacturer about seven ticals a picul, and at this rate it may have any quantity required. It commonly receives about 35,000 piculs a-year, which is easily disposed of in ordinary times at ten ticals a picul. The difference is a revenue of 105,000 ticals, or 13,125*l.*

I possess no data for estimating the profits made by the Siamese Government on its foreign adventures to China, Java, or the Straits of Malacca; but it is probable, from the great impositions practised by the Chinese commanders, and other persons employed, and the fre-

quent shipwrecks which are known to take place, that they are very trifling.

The duties and other imposts levied on external trade are somewhat complex, and differ in degree according to the class of vessels subjected to them, and which consist of junks carrying on trade with China proper, junks of the Island of Hai-nan, junks trading to the Malayan islands, and European shipping. The imposts consist of a duty on the measurement or dimensions of the vessel, an *ad valorem* duty upon imports, and a rated tarif in most cases, with an *ad valorem* duty in a few, on exports. The first-named class of vessels, viz. the large junks trading with the principal ports of China, pay no measurement or import duties, because these are vessels belonging to the King, or to the Princes, or such courtiers whose perquisite it is to be licensed to engage in this branch of trade. The Hai-nan junks pay forty ticals per Siamese fathom, on the extreme breadth of the vessel. The junks trading to the Malay countries, in lieu of measurement duty, pay one hundred and thirty ticals each, without regard to size. Neither of these vessels pay import duties. The measurement duties on European vessels is estimated at one hundred and eighteen ticals per fathom, besides an inconsiderable impost in the form of an anchorage fee. The cargoes of these alone pay an import duty, which is reckoned

at eight per cent. *ad valorem* levied in kind. The tarif on exports is imposed indiscriminately on all classes of vessels, and the following are some of the particulars of it.

Sapan Wood,	per picul	670	cowries.
Rose Wood,	do.	450	do.
Ivory	do.	2½	ticals.
Stic-lac	do.	½	do.
Sugar, if exported under an European flag,	do.	1½	do.
Do. if under an Indian flag	do.	1	do.
Salt	per coyan	4	do.
Dinding, or Jerk Beef,	per picul	2	do.
Cabus, (a river fish)	do.	½	do.
Shrimps, (dried)	do.	2	do.
Deer Sinews	do.	4	do.
Pepper, (long)	do.	½	do.
Areca Nut	do.	¼	do.
Mangrove Bark	do.	480	cowries.
Peacock Tails, each	do.	640	do.
Ray Skins	do.	3	ticals.
Buffalo, or Bullock Hides	per picul	1	do.
Wing Feathers of the Pelican	do.	6	do.
Elephant's Bones	do.	1	do.
Deer Skins (small)	per 100	3	do.
Deer Skins (large)	do.	8	do.
Deers' Horns (old)	per picul	¼	do.
Deers' Antlers (soft)		20	per cent.
Sharks' Fins (white)	per picul	6	ticals.

Sharks' Fins (black)	per picul	3	ticals.
Esculent Swallows' Nests		20	per cent
Cotton freed from the Seed . . .	do.	½	tical.

Such was the tarif when we visited Siam in 1822, but it is by no means immutable, for every Prince at his accession commonly issues a new one, and does not scruple to enhance or diminish at his pleasure that of his predecessor.

A conjecture, but nothing better, may be hazarded respecting the amount of revenue derived by the Government from these imposts. The whole external trade of Siam is roughly estimated at 527,450 piculs, or about 33,000 tons; and the revenue derived by the Government from the European branch of it, is ascertained, from very correct statements, to amount to forty ticals on each ton. Did it amount to the same on the whole tonnage, the Government would, in fact, be in the receipt of 1,320,000 ticals; but such an estimate would be very wide of the truth, for, as already mentioned, the other branches of the foreign trade pay no import duties, pay a small admeasurement duty, or none at all, and, above all, possess more adroitness and readier means of evading duties of all descriptions than the European trader. With these deductions, the whole duties ought not perhaps to be estimated at a higher rate than one-fifth part of those on the European

trade, which would afford, however, a yearly revenue of 264,000 ticals, or 33,000*l.*

The land-tax in Siam is of two descriptions viz. a tax on fruit-trees and certain other productions of the soil, according to their number and value; and a fixed tax on all corn-lands, according to their extent, without regard to their quality. The land itself, with respect to the proprietary right in it, admits also of a double distinction—gardens, orchards, and houses being viewed as the private property of the occupants, and capable of any description of alienation; whilst corn-lands, constituting in value and extent the great bulk of the cultivated part of the kingdom, are viewed, as under other Asiatic monarchies, as the property of the State —the tenant or peasant, however, standing little risk of ejectment or removal, not on account of the tenderness of the Government for his interests, but the necessity which it feels for his services as a drudge and a cultivator. Even this description of land is occasionally private property held under a formal grant of "eight seals" from the King.

The produce of fruit-trees and certain other raw productions of the soil being rather objects of luxury than necessity, the tax upon these may be viewed as a mode of levying an excise duty which falls upon the consumer in the enhanced price which he pays for the produce.

The amount of this tax is as follows:—On each durian-tree *(Durio Tibethinus)*, one tical; on each mangoe-tree, one-eighth of a tical; on each mangosteen, the same; on every eight cocoa-nut trees, one-eighth of a tical; on every eight areca-palms, one-sixteenth of a tical; on every eight betel pepper-vines, one-eighth of a tical; on every bed of bannanas, a quarter of a tical; on every hundred tobacco-plants, the same; on every bed of sugar-canes, the same also. All other fruit-trees, except those now named, as well as pepper, are exempted from this species of tax. The tax on fruit-trees, and nearly in the same form, although differing somewhat in amount on each object, existed at the close of the seventeenth century, and is particularly described by La Loubere. Its annual amount, according to the statement furnished to me, is about 520,000 ticals, or 65,000*l.*

The Siamese territory is so thinly peopled, and there has been so little occasion to have recourse to lands of an inferior description, that it is probable, that very little of what is strictly rent exists. For this reason, and as a natural counterbalance to the burthen of the conscription, or public corvees, we find the land-tax extremely light, in comparison to what it is in Hindostan, and other densely peopled countries of Western Asia.

According to the accounts rendered to me, it

amounts, on all lands cultivated with rice, to a yearly fixed tax of two and a half *tangs*, or baskets of the grain in the husk, on each measure of twenty Siamese fathoms square. The *tang*, by calculation, is found to amount to 29.33lbs. avoirdupois of clean rice, and the measure in question to $\frac{30}{100}$ of an English acre. The tax, therefore, amounts to 36.66lbs. for every such measure, or to 94.25lbs. on each acre; which, taking the average price of rice at Siam, for good and bad years, at sixteen ticals per coyan of twenty-two Chinese piculs each, will give little more than a tax of 5.89 pence on the Siamese measure of forty fathoms square, or about fifteen-pence halfpenny per English acre. This, it will be observed, instead of being a tax of one-half, of one-third, or one-fourth the gross produce of the soil, as in Western India, will probably not be found to exceed a sixth, an eighth, or a tenth part of it. The rate of the land-tax, as given by La Loubere, or a quarter of a tical for a measure of forty Siamese fathoms square, amounts to no more than 4.84 pence per English acre, or less than one-third even of the moderate rate at which it was stated to me, which would not amount to a twentieth share of the gross produce of rice-lands upon a most moderate estimate. Of the amount of this tax I heard no estimate given while I was in Siam; and being indeed an impost paid in kind,

it is probable that it has never been ascertained with any degree of correctness. A rough conjecture, however, may be offered on the subject. Siam, in the fertility of its soil, the character of its agricultural industry, and the civilization of its inhabitants, more nearly resembles Java than any other country. In this last country, a tolerable approximation has been made in ascertaining the proportion of cultivated land to the population. If the proportions be the same in Siam, and the population be taken at five millions, the cultivated land would in that case amount to 4,442,590 English acres, which, at a tax of fifteenpence halfpenny per acre, would afford a gross revenue of 2,295,338 ticals, or 286,917*l.* 5*s.* 5*d.* which is, at all events, probably not an exaggerated statement.

The conscription and corvées form unquestionably not only the heaviest tax upon the people, but, if they can be so called, the most considerable branch of the public revenue. The age of servitude is twenty. This would include about one-tenth part of the whole population of the kingdom, estimated at 5,000,000; from which, however, must be deducted officers of Government, slaves and priests, probably amounting to about 100,000; leaving therefore 400,000 subject to the conscription. As the period of service is one-third part of the year, the number of persons actually engaged in the corvées, or at the disposal of Government for every description

of service, will amount to 133,333; equal to a money revenue, at the lowest composition, taken for a conscript, or six ticals a month, to near nine millions six hundred thousand ticals per annum, or 1,200,000*l*. Such an estimate, however, after all, is much less a statement of the revenue which the Government receives, than an index of the waste and prodigality of these forced services; since it would be utterly erroneous to estimate at so high a value the unwilling, slothful, and ill-directed services of the indiscriminate multitude that composes the conscription.

The Chinese colonists are the only class of the population exempted from the conscription, in lieu of which every male of twenty years of age and upwards pays a poll-tax, with the exception of a few individuals bearing Siamese titles. Every individual who has discharged his contribution for the year is directed to wear upon his wrist a badge, bearing the seal of the officer to whom he has made payment; in failure of which, he is liable to be seized, and compelled to make a second payment. The amount of the tax, for each individual, is two ticals to the Government, and a fuang and a half to the collector. I was informed, that the number of persons paying the contribution within the city of Bangkok and its jurisdiction was 31,500, but I had no opportunity of ascertaining its amount throughout the rest of the kingdom. The following analogy, however, will perhaps be considered to afford grounds for a

reasonable conjecture on the subject. The Chinese are the principal consumers, and therefore the principal contributors to the spirit tax, which in Bangkok and its jurisdiction amounts to 144,000 ticals, and in the whole kingdom to 460,000. If the Chinese liable to the poll-tax be in a similar proportion, their contribution to the State will amount to 201,250 ticals—25,156*l.* 5*s.*

The following exhibits a recapitulation of the different taxes now enumerated:

	Ticals	£
Spirit-tax	460,000	57,500
Gaming	460,000	57,500
Fishery of the Menam	64;000	8,000
Shop-tax	121,880	15,235
Monopoly of tin	54,000	6,750
Do. of ivory	40,000	5,000
Cardamums and Japan-wood		
Eagle-wood	45,000	5,625
Gamboge	24,000	3,000
Swallows' nests	100,000	12,500
Turtles' eggs	5,000	625
Pepper	400,000	50,000
Sugar	105,000	13,125
Customs	264,000	33,000
Tax on fruit-trees, &c.	520,000	65,000
Land-tax	2,295,338	286,917
Corvées	20,000,000	2,500,000
Chinese poll-tax	201,250	25,156
Total Ticals	25,159,468	£3,144,933

From this statement, it will appear that the revenue of the Siamese Government actually paid in money amount to 2,091,130 sticals, or 260,891*l.*, or in money, and produce immediately convertible into money, to 2,864,130 ticals, or 658,016*l.* The land-tax paid in grain I have estimated at 286,917*l.* The total revenue in money or kind, therefore, exclusive of the corvées, is 5,159,468 ticals, or 644,933*l.*; a mean and inconsiderable sum for a country so fertile and extensive, possessing such natural facilities for internal intercourse, so favourably situated for external trade, and containing so considerable a population. La Loubere informs us that the revenue of Siam, paid in ready money before his time, used to be reckoned at 1,200,000 livres, or 400,000 ticals, 50,000*l*; but that the reigning sovereign of his day had raised it to 2,000,000 of livres, or above 83,000*l.* If this statement, and that which I have offered, can at all be relied on, they will afford a proof that Siam has greatly improved in wealth and resources during the long internal tranquillity, of between fifty and sixty years, which has prevailed since the expulsion of the Burmans, and especially during the last forty years of that period.

Besides the objects of revenue which I have enumerated, the Government of Siam derives some less considerable advantages from other sources; such as tributes and occasional contributions paid by or levied upon the dependent states, with fines and confiscations derived from the administration of

justice; but of these I have no materials for forming an estimate.

The Siamese, like other rude and arbitrary Governments, has in general no distinct and allotted fiscal establishment. The department of trade, and the charge of the customs and monopolies, are under the management of the Phraklang, and the collection of the land revenue and tax on fruit-trees, as already mentioned, is conducted by the Phonlateb, both being subject to the Chakri; but the agents of these persons are the same who conduct all other departments of the administration; and in the distant Governments, the viceroys and hereditary chiefs appear to act on their own authority, only remitting the taxes to the capital. The remuneration for the trouble of collecting, as well indeed as for every other description of service, is a tithe, or tenth of the revenue realized, called in the Siamese language Sib-lot, without any salary or other reward, excepting the services of a certain number of the conscripts, according to the rank of the party.

The revenue and expenditure of the Siamese Government, I was told, are nearly balanced; and it is said, that there are seldom above 240,000 ticals in the public treasury, over and above a small quantity of Spanish dollars, and Chinese silver ingots ready for coinage.

One subject connected with the Government, and of some importance with a vain and osten-

tatious people, remains to be noticed—the arms and insignia of the state. The royal seals are three in number. The great seal used in correspondence with foreign states, has upon it the impression of a lion. That of the next importance, has upon it a human figure holding a lotus flower in the hand. The third is simply a lotus flower. The two first are only used in affairs of consequence; the last, in all daily current business. The banner of the kingdom is a white elephant on a crimson field.

In Siam, except in some cases of appeal, there appears to exist no establishments exclusively for judicial purposes. The same chiefs who are charged with the military, civil, and revenue administrations, are also the only judges and magistrates, and the final decision or judgment resting always with the individual exercising the chief local authority, whoever that may be, while the inferior officers institute the process, take the evidence, and point out the law in the character of assessors.

The Siamese have written laws, of which it not unfrequently happens that each new sovereign, on his accession, publishes a new edition, making such arbitrary changes as he thinks proper. To what extent the letter of this code is complied with in the practice of the courts, I am unable to state; but, in such a condition of society, it is

probable that it is not very rigidly adhered to. La Loubere, after mentioning that a particular officer reads aloud the title of the law, touching the cause before the court, makes the following observation:—" Mais ils disputent dans ce pays là comme en celui-ci du sens des loix. Ils y cherchent des accommodements à titre d'Equité; et sous prétexte que toutes les circonstances du fait ne sont jamais dans la loi, ils ne suivent jamais le loi."

Captain John Lowe, of the Indian army, an indefatigable scholar, and who has the merit of being the only Englishman who has ever acquired a knowledge of the language and literature of the Siamese, has furnished the Royal Asiatic Society with an abstract of the Siamese laws, drawn from their own codes. Several of these are of an antiquity much beyond what I should have expected. One is dated as far back as 1053 of Christ; another in the year 1614, and a third in 1773. In one of these, reference is made to a code as old as the year 561 of Christ.

Witnesses, according to the Siamese law, are examined upon oath, on formal and solemn occasions only, which is agreeable to the universal practice of all Eastern nations. The form of oath administered is not only a curiosity in itself, but strikingly illustrative of the religious opinions and character of the people, and therefore I shall transcribe it from the translation of Captain

Lowe. It is as follows:—"I, who have been brought here as an evidence in this matter, do, now, in presence of the divine Prah-Phutt'hi-rop (Buddha), declare that I am wholly unprejudiced against either party, and uninfluenced in any way by the opinions or advice of others, and that no prospects of pecuniary advantage or of advancement to office have been held out to me; I also declare that I have not received any bribe on this occasion. If what I have now spoken be false, or if in my farther averments I should colour or pervert the truth, so as to lead the judgment of others astray, may the three Holy Existences, viz. Buddha, the Bali (personified), and the priests, before whom I now stand, together with the glorious Dewatas (demi-gods) of the twenty-two firmaments, punish me.

"If I have not seen, yet shall say that I have seen; if I shall say that I know that which I do not know, then may I be thus punished. Should innumerable descents of the Deity happen for the regeneration and salvation of mankind, may my erring and migrating soul be found beyond the pale of their mercy. Wherever I go, may I be encompassed with dangers, and not escape from them, whether arising from murderers, robbers, spirits of the earth, of the woods, of water, or of air, or from all the divinities who adore Buddha, or from the gods of the four elements, and all other spirits.

"May blood flow out of every pore of my body, that my crime may be made manifest to the world; may all or any of these evils overtake me within three days, or may I never stir from the spot on which I now stand, or may the *hatsani*, or lash of the sky (lightning), cut me in two, so that I may be exposed to the derision of the people. Or if I should be walking abroad, may I be torn to pieces by either of the four supernaturally endowed lions, or destroyed by poisonous herbs or venomous snakes. If when in the waters of the rivers or ocean, may supernatural crocodiles or great fishes devour me, or may the winds and waves overwhelm me; or may the dread of such evils keep me, during life, a prisoner at home, estranged from every pleasure, or may I be afflicted by the intolerable oppressions of my superiors, or may a plague cause my death; after which, may I be precipitated into hell, there to go through innumerable stages of torture, amongst which may I be condemned to carry water over the flaming regions in open wicker-baskets to assuage the heat felt by Than-Wetsuwan, when he enters the infernal hall of justice, and thereafter may I fall into the lowest pit of hell; or if these miseries should not ensue, may I after death migrate into the body of a slave, and suffer all the hardships and pain attending the worst state of such a being, during a period of years measured by the sand of four seas; or may I animate the

body of an animal, or beast, during five hundred generations; or be born a hermaphrodite five hundred times, or endure in the body of a deaf, blind, dumb, houseless beggar, every species of loathsome disease during the same number of generations, and then may I be hurried to Narak, or hell, and there be crucified by Phria-Yam,* one of the Kings of Hell."

With respect to the persons competent or incompetent to give evidence before a court of justice, the Siamese betray the usual caprice of barbarians. The best witnesses are openly declared to be priests and men in office. Of incompetent witnesses we have a list of not less than eight-and-twenty, containing a very curious medley, as follows:—Contemners of religion, persons in debt, the slaves of a party to a suit, intimate friends, idiots, those who do not hold in abhorrence the cardinal sins, among which are enumerated, besides theft and murder, drinking spirits, breaking prescribed fasts, and reposing on the mat or couch of a priest or parent; gamblers, vagrants, executioners, quackdoctors, play-actors, hermaphrodites, strolling musicians, prostitutes, blacksmiths, persons labouring under incurable disorders; persons under seven, or above seventy; backbiters, insane persons, persons of violent passions, shoe-makers, beggars, braziers, mid-wives, and sorcerers.

* The Lord Yama, that is, the Hindoo Pluto.

On important occasions, torture is applied to extort evidence; and the usual mode of putting a witness to the question, in such cases, is by pressing the temples between two boards, and then producing frequent concussions by the strokes of a piece of raw hide. Torture is commonly had recourse to only in cases of treason and atrocious robbery.

The ordeal is now and then had recourse to, and the common forms of it consist in the litigant parties diving in water, or immersing their hands in boiling oil or melted tin. In the first case, he who continues longest under water gains his cause; and in the second, the party that withdraws his hand harmless from the burning liquid. La Loubere mentions another extremely whimsical form of ordeal, of which I was also informed. When goods are stolen, and suspicion of theft falls upon a number of persons generally, the practice is to administer certain emetic medicines to the whole, under the direction of a medical practitioner. In this case, the person who vomits first is deemed the culprit; or, in other words, a strong stomach implies an honest man, while a delicate one is sufficient proof of knavery. The watery ordeal is chiefly had recourse to in cases of adultery, and the trial by boiling oil and melted tin in trials for theft.

According to the Siamese law, all contracts touching matters of property ought to be in

the form of a writing. Debts recovered in a court of justice are taxed, for the benefit of the Government, with a tithe of the amount realized. The ordinary interest of money is three per cent. per month; but its accumulation cannot exceed the amount of the principal. Compound interest is not allowed. The King, it is said, is entitled to seventy-five per cent. per annum interest, for such money as he may lend to a subject.

The law in respect to debtor and creditor is as follows:—A debt not paid in three years is considered to be doubled only, provided the creditor have neglected to put in his claim for the usual interest. Payment is enforced by imprisonment, by shackles, by stripes, and finally by exposure, without protection, to the direct rays of the sun, which process is denominated in the Siamese language "exsiccation," that is, drying a man. Finally, should the creditor be unable to discharge his debt, the law adjudges him to become the slave of the King, or of his creditor, according to circumstances.

The law of inheritance is this. Wills may be either written or nuncupatory, but in either case must be made in the presence of four witnesses. A man may will his property in any proportion he pleases among his wife and children, but cannot pass these over in favour of strangers. If a man die intestate, his widow

has the usufruct of the estate during her lifetime or widowhood; on the termination of either of which, the property is divided amongst the children. Daughters receive according to circumstances from half a share to a whole share more than sons, and the children of concubines are entitled only to one half the share of those of a wedded wife. No preference whatever is given to an elder son. If a man have no wife or children, his property goes to his father and mother, and in failure of these is divided amongst his brothers and sisters. It ought to be stated that the property of persons of rank, that is to say, of the superior officers of Government, is often confiscated under pretext of malversation,—the King in this case exhibiting an account against the estate of the deceased, of which he is himself the framer and the auditor.

The nature of the marriage contract among the Siamese, does not differ essentially from its condition among other Oriental people. Indeed, it may be remarked, that there is no feature in Eastern manners in which there is so general an agreement as in this. The Siamese suitor usually pays a price for his bride—a betrothing precedes marriage — the marriage is a civil contract, in which the Talapoins do not meddle, except by offering prayers for, and bestowing benedictions upon the parties, and both concubinage and a plurality of wives are legal. Divorces appear to be

obtained without difficulty, and are frequent among the lower orders. An unequivocal and reciprocal expression of the desire of the parties for a separation, seems all that is requisite. When the divorce is desired by one party only, there is a little more difficulty. The party suing in this case, pays a fine for the benefit of the other. In any case of a divorce, each party receives back what it originally contributed to the common stock,—the wife, however, receiving no share of the gain or accumulation. If the children be grown up, they follow the father or mother at their own option; but in the event of their being young, the distribution which the law enacts is remarkable,—the female children going to the father, and the boys to the mother; on the alleged principle that the girls are most likely to prove useful to the first, and the boys to the last.* A divorce has no sooner taken place, than the parties are at perfect freedom to form a new connexion, without any of those jealous restraints which the laws of the Hindoos and Mohammedans have entailed upon the weaker sex.

A breach of the marriage vow does not at present appear to be viewed in Siam as a very

* The distribution, as given by La Loubere, is different. According to him, the first and every odd child goes to the mother—the even numbers to the father; so that if there be but one child, the mother receives a preference.

heavy offence. It is punished by a pecuniary fine,—the adulterer, if a man of rank, paying a mulct of six catties of silver, (60*l.*); and if of the lower orders, one-third of that amount.

The penal code of Siam bears a strong analogy to that of China, especially in the liberal and indiscriminate application which it makes of the bamboo for the punishment of all offences. Petty larcenies are punished by thirty blows; higher degrees of theft, by ninety blows, and an imprisonment, longer or shorter, according to circumstances of aggravation; robbery, with ninety blows and imprisonment, with hard labour for life. The legal punishment of an incendiary is mutilation by cutting off the offending hand, which the late King used to commute for the highest punishment of theft. Murder is always punished with death, and the mode of execution is by decapitation with a sword. Forging the royal signet and counterfeiting the current coin, are also, by law, punishable with death; but in these cases, too, the punishment has of late been commonly commuted for imprisonment for life, and the heaviest infliction of the bamboo. Among the offences for which the law prescribes a capital punishment is the violation of the law of chastity in the Talapoins. This is now frequently commuted into the punishment of cutting grass for the royal elephants for life; and there were several

ex-priests so employed when we were in Siam. Sedition and treason are of course unpardonable offences under such a government as that of Siam. The law ordains, in these cases, that the criminals shall be trodden to death by elephants, or devoured by tigers. No such barbarous punishments, however, had been inflicted during the late reign, although, by the testimony of well-informed European writers, they appear in other periods of the history of Siam to have been sufficiently frequent.

Abusive language and assault are commonly punished by a pecuniary mulct; and if the injury be offered by an inferior to a superior, or by one of the laity to a priest, corporal punishment is added to the fine. Except in this particular, the Siamese law, unlike that of the Hindoos, makes no distinction in the measure of its punishments arising out of the rank of the parties. The Talapoins especially have no immunities like the Brahmins; on the contrary, their sacred character is reasonably considered as an aggravation of any offence of which they may be guilty. It is true, they cannot be proceeded against in their character of priests; but the process of degradation, stripping them of their sacerdotal habit, is summary and easy, and then they become amenable to the temporal jurisdiction for offences committed as Talapoins.

It deserves to be noticed, that neither the law

of retaliation, nor the practice of paying a pecuniary composition for crimes, exists among the Siamese. It would be incompatible with the spirit of Siamese government, under which the people have been disarmed, and tamed down to the lowest state of submission, to leave in their hands so large a share of free action, as would be implied by abandoning to them the right of vindicating their own quarrels.

In civil suits, the delays of the law are as notorious in Siam as in any European country. I was told, that a civil cause of any consequence was seldom brought to a termination under one year, and that a suit often lasted three and four. La Loubere's estimate of the procrastination of justice in his time is still stronger. "Every process," he says, "ought to end in three days, and there are some which last for three years."

Of the military force of Siam we had little opportunity of obtaining any correct knowledge. It consists of such part of the general conscription as the ambition, caprice, or necessities of the Sovereign may put into requisition for the exclusive purposes of war. There is every reason to believe that the armies of Siam, however numerous, are little better than a rabble,—timid, ill-armed, and undisciplined. Their tactics, in common with those of other Hindoo Chinese nations, are now sufficiently well known. Their timid warfare consists in skirmishes, partial actions, and

attack of insulated posts, conducted from the security of stockaded entrenchments, and commonly tedious and indecisive. Neither the character of the Siamese, nor that of the country which they inhabit, leads them to hazard general actions similar to those great pitched battles which among the more warlike people of Western and Northern Asia have often decided the fate of nations. I was informed, when in Siam, that the army did not fall short of 30,000 men, armed with swords, spears, and European muskets; of which last they have of late years obtained a large supply from ourselves and from the Americans. Judging by the guards we saw in the palace,—and most probably these were among the best troops,—the Siamese armies must be extremely contemptible, and such as may reasonably be expected from a force indiscriminately levied from an unwarlike peasantry, held together only by the terror of proscriptions and executions, with ignorant chiefs as officers, and a rude Government to organize and direct them.

The force, of which this is the general character, consists principally of infantry, with a very inconsiderable number of cavalry, mounted on the small horses or ponies of Lao and Yunan, and an artillery equally inefficient. Siam contains between twenty and thirty walled towns, which, judging from the fortifications of the capital, are feebly and unskilfully constructed, and quite

incapable of being defended from the attacks of an enemy possessing the least military knowledge. The bastions and ramparts of Bangkok have no cannon mounted upon them—these being kept in sheds, under pretext of protecting them from the weather, but in fact to prevent their being turned against the palace in the event of sedition, always held in constant dread by the Siamese Government.

CHAPTER III.

Siamese History.—Ancient Story.—First intercourse of Europeans with Siam.—Conquest by the Burmese.—Story of the Greek adventurer Constantine Phaulcon, and connection with France.—Invasion and conquest of Siam by the Burmese.—Burmese driven out of the country.—Reign and death of the Usurper, commonly called Pia-Metak.—Present Dynasty.—Trade.—Internal commerce.—Trade with China.—Trade with Kamboja, Cochin China, and the Malay countries.—Natural History.—Climate.—Mineral products.—Vegetable productions.—Quadrupeds.—Birds.—Reptiles.

THE following is a brief sketch of Siamese history. The Siamese call themselves T'hai; by the Burmans they are called Shan, and by the Chinese, the Kambojans and Malays, Sëam, which last is no doubt the origin of the name by which they are recognised amongst European nations. In addressing letters to foreign countries, the name of the capital, or, more literally, of the palace or residence of the King, is by a figure applied to the whole country. This term, Si-Ut'hiya, appears to be of mythological origin, and, I have little doubt, is a local corruption of the Sanscrit Sri Ayudhya, the name of the kingdom of the Hindoo god and hero Rama,—a personage familiar to Siamese legend. From

this come again the European corruptions of the name of the old capital of Siam, Yuthia, Odia and Judia, all of which are to be found in our maps and charts. La Loubere states that the Siamese are divided into two nations,—the T'hai Yai and the T'hai Noe, or the great and little Siamese—the latter being the proper Siamese, as generally known to Europeans, and the other a more ancient people. I could not find that any such distinction was at present generally recognised in Siam, but was informed that the people of Lao, who speak a dialect of the Siamese, were occasionally denominated T'hai Yai.

The authentic history of the Siamese is of no very remote antiquity; and the only facts in regard to it which are to be relied upon, can scarcely be said to date farther back than the era of their first acquaintance with European nations. I was informed in Siam, that a person in the character of an historiographer is regularly employed by the Court to chronicle passing events, and that the records thus compiled by him were deposited in the public archives. If such materials for history really exist, they are not accessible to strangers, and there is no opportunity of appreciating their value. The Phraklang, and other chiefs with whom I conversed, appeared either very ill-informed, or very reluctant to communicate what they knew. I was anxious, for example, to ascertain from them some particulars

respecting the origin and history of the dependence of the Malayan states on Siam, but could get no satisfaction whatever—being only told that the thing had been so time out of mind.

The few scattered facts of Siamese story known, or accessible to Europeans, may be very shortly told. The earliest historical event which has come to my knowledge, is the introduction of the religion of Gautama from Ceylon, which took place in the year of Christ 638, and, as stated in another place, under a sovereign known by the name of Krek. From that period, down to the year 1824, there had reigned, according to the Siamese, sixty princes; which would agree very nearly with the European computation of twenty years for the average of each reign. In the year 1187, the twenty-third Siamese king had the seat of his government at Lakontai, a town situated nearly in the twentieth degree of North latitude, and upon the borders of Lao. The late capital, Yuthia, was founded by the twenty-seventh Siamese king, in the year 1350.

In 1502, we have the first notice of Siamese story on European authority. In that year, the King of Siam sent an unsuccessful expedition against the principality of Malacca. In 1511, the Portuguese, after the conquest of Malacca by Albuquerque, established their first intercourse with Siam. In 1547, a revolution took place in the country; and in 1549, another. In 1567,

the Burmans conquered Siam, and held it in subjection until the year 1596, when the Siamese recovered their independence. The character and circumstances of this invasion resemble in many respects that which took place about two centuries thereafter, and nearly in our own times. The first intercourse between our own nation and the Siamese, appears to have taken place in the year 1612; when, on the 4th of August of that year, an English ship ascended the river to Yuthia. In the year 1621, the Portuguese viceroy of Goa sent a mission to Siam; and in the same year, the Dominican and Franciscan monks found their way into the kingdom. In 1627, another revolution occurred, by which a new dynasty was placed on the throne.

The son of this usurper, the fifty-second Siamese king, was the well-known correspondent and ally of Louis the Fourteenth. In 1683, we find a Greek adventurer of the Island of Cephalonia, the son of an innkeeper, raised by a singular destiny; and, after filling various inferior employments in the service of the English East India Company, to the post of Phraklang, or Foreign Minister of Siam. This was the celebrated Constantine Phaulcon, of whose story Voltaire with justice remarks, that it affords a striking example of the intellectual superiority of the European over the other races of men. Through the influence and intrigues of this per-

son, and the skill and activity of the Jesuits, the reigning King, himself an extraordinary man for an Asiatic prince, undertook in 1684 to send an embassy to Louis the Fourteenth, whose vanity was flattered, as the celebrated writer just quoted remarks, by such a compliment from a country ignorant until then that such a place as France existed. In the same year, the Siamese ambassadors, who had come from their own country in an English merchant-ship, are said to have concluded in London a commercial treaty with the Court of St. James's, then in strict friendship and alliance with that of France. In 1685, Louis the Fourteenth sent the Chevalier Chaumont at the head of a splendid embassy to Siam. Two years thereafter he sent a second mission, with a squadron of ships and a force of five hundred French soldiers. In the same year, 1687, a massacre of the English took place at the Siamese port and city of Mergui, to all appearance provoked by the intemperance and arrogance of Englishmen in authority. In the following year, the English factory, which had been for some time established at Yuthia, was finally removed from Siam.

In the year 1690 a revolution took place in Siam, through which the reigning family lost the throne, the Minister Phaulcon his life, and the French were expelled from the country; thus losing, by want of moderation in the beginning,

and of energy, decision and political courage in the sequel, an early and apparently an easy opportunity of establishing a French Empire in the East. In 1719, Mr. Collett, the Governor of Madras, is stated to have taken upon himself to cancel the commercial treaty concluded by the Siamese ambassadors in 1684, and to declare war against the Siamese in the name of the East India Company.

A new dynasty sat on the throne from the year 1690 down to 1767, during which long period no political or diplomatic intercourse took place between the Siamese and the nations of Europe, and the commercial intercourse appears to have been very inconsiderable. In 1733, a civil war broke out between the son and grandson of the usurper of 1690, and Siam was thrown into a state of anarchy and weakness, which continued until the year 1759. Of this state of things the ambitious and able Burman adventurer, who had lately possessed himself of the kingdoms of Ava and Pegu, and who is commonly called by Europeans Alompra and Manlong, took advantage, and resolved to effect its conquest. The pretext for the war was the asylum afforded to a Peguan general when he put into the port of Mergui, on his way to seek assistance from the French Government at Pondicherry. Alompra advanced to Martaban, and finally fixed his residence for a time at Tavoy,

which at this period was independent either of Siam or Pegu. From thence he sent an armament, which succeeded in destroying the towns of Mergui and Tennasserim, and in occupying the whole province. Encouraged by this success, he marched in person, with a large army, upon the Siamese capital, in 1760, ravaging the country through which he passed with fire and sword, and his troops committing, as usual, the most brutal excesses. When within three days' march of Yuthia, Alompra was seized with a mortal disorder. The army, however, still advanced, and having attacked the town, were, after repeated assaults, forced to give up the enterprise, and commenced a retreat. This last measure was chiefly necessary, owing to the death of Alompra, and the necessity which existed for his heir, who was in camp, to return to Ava to contend for the succession to the throne.

During the short reign of the immediate successor of Alompra, the Burmans undertook no hostile movements against the Siamese; but shortly after the accession of Shembuan, the second son of Alompra, and the same prince who had been present with his father in the irruption made by him into Siam, the war against the Siamese was recommenced. Its first object was the reconquest of Tavoy in 1766; the Burman governor of which had, since the year 1761, declared his independence, and now entered into an alliance with the

Siamese. In the beginning of 1765 the Burmai forces, by surprise, recaptured Mergui, which dur ing the last reign had fallen back into the hand of the Siamese, and shortly afterwards they ob tained possession of Tennasserim. From Mergu the Burman army marched upon Yuthia, to effec which it was necessary to traverse extensive fo rests, and to pass steep mountains. The Siames collected their forces,—met the Burmans in a general action, and were routed. After this vic tory, the Burmans met no resistance in the oper country, which they ravaged without mercy Their unskilful and protracted military opera tions, notwithstanding the admitted pusillani mity of their enemy, lasted for a whole year for it appears, that in the month of March 1766 they had approached within two leagues of th capital, and it was not until the April of th following year that the place was taken by as sault. The excesses committed by the Burmans upon this last occasion, are described to hav been of a most ruthless description. The inha bitants were plundered of their property, many massacred, some put to the rack to extort th discovery of hidden treasure, and thousands car ried off as slaves and captives. What seem singular in a people professing the same reli gion, the Burmans pillaged and destroyed th Siamese temples, carrying off or melting down

the images of brass, and tortured or murdered the Talapoins. The first officers of the kingdom were loaded with irons, and condemned to row the Burman war-boats. The King of Siam, recognized by the assailants, was killed at the gate of his palace. His predecessor, who had abdicated the throne and retired to a monastery, was dragged from his retreat, and carried a prisoner to Ava, along with the princes and princesses of his family. The Burman general and his army retired from Siam in the month of June, without apparently making any arrangement for the permanent occupation of the country. They had no sooner retreated, than the Siamese were in a state of insurrection, rising upon the Burmans and their partizans, and massacring them wherever they met them. A chief of Chinese descent put himself at the head of the insurgents, and in the year 1769 seized upon the throne, and proclaimed himself King. This was the person commonly known under the name of Phia-tak, an abbreviation of Phria Metak (the Lord or Governor of Metak), which is the name of a Siamese province on the borders of Lao.* The usurper is admitted to have

* Without the help of a native instructor, it would not be possible to discover this derivation in the European corruptions of it, which have been current. Turpin, for example, writes the name "Phaia-Thâe;" and Col. Syme, much more erroneously, "Pieticksing."

been a man of courage, good sense, and discernment. In the same year he exerted himself with skill and success to relieve a famine with which the country was afflicted. Afterwards he suppressed a rebellion which broke out under a Siamese prince, who had returned from the island of Ceylon; apprehended the insurgent, and executed him. He reduced to obedience the provinces of Piseluk and Ligor, the governors of which had, during the Burman invasion, declared their independence.

The Burman King, in 1771, prepared an expedition for the reconquest of Siam, which totally failed, in consequence of a mutiny among part of the troops which had been raised in the conquered provinces of Martaban and Tavoy. The reign of Phia-tak may be stated to have commenced in the year 1769. The character of activity, moderation, and good sense which distinguished the early part of it, was changed in his last years for caprice, superstition, and tyranny, which led to a general belief that he was labouring under insanity. This brought on a formidable rebellion against his authority in the year 1782, headed by the great officer of state named the Chakri, who was at the time in command of an army in the kingdom of Kamboja. This chief marched to the new capital, Bangkok, dethroned the King, put him to death, and seized

upon the Government.* The first prince of the present dynasty sat on the throne until the year 1809, when dying, he was succeeded by his eldest son, the late King, on the 11th of September of the same year. During this reign the Burmans, in the year 1785, and under the fifth prince of the race of Alompra, attempted the conquest of Junk-Ceylon, of which they obtained temporary possession, but were finally discomfited and expelled.

In 1786 the King of Ava, in person, again attempted the conquest of Siam, an army advancing from each of the three ordinary principal points of attack, Tavoy, Martaban, and Chiang-mai. The King was at the head of that which advanced from Martaban, and soon after entering the hostile frontier, was encountered by a Siamese army, lost his cannon, and was nearly taken prisoner. From 1786 to 1793 the Burmans and Siamese contended for the possession of the sea-coast of Tennasserim, with considerable animation. It finally continued in the possession of the former by a truce concluded between the parties in the last-named year.

*The manner of executing any person of the royal family in Siam, for there is a repugnance to shed their blood in its literal acceptation, is to beat them to death over the head with a club of sandal wood, and then throwing the body into a bag, to toss it, without funeral rites, into the Menam. Phia-tak, although base-born, had the honour of suffering death after this fashion.

The late King of Siam succeeded to the throne, as already mentioned, in the year 1809. Thirty-six hours after the demise of his predecessor, he put to death one hundred and seventeen chiefs and other persons suspected of being unfavourable to his pretensions to the throne. Among these was the Prince Chao-Fa, his nephew, the chief object of his jealousy, and with whom he had promised to his own father, on his death-bed, that he should live as a brother. His reign, after this act of atrocity, was far from being of a sanguinary character. On the contrary, it was marked by a commendable share of moderation. I was assured, by persons on whose fidelity I could rely, that during the two years preceding our own arrival in the country, not one execution had taken place. His reign was disturbed by three inconsiderable insurrections only. The last of these took place a few months previous to our visit, and originated among the Talapoins, who had conspired to resist an unusual attempt to fill the ranks of the army from among their numbers. Seven hundred priests were arrested upon this occasion, but the greater number were soon liberated—none were executed, and a few only were punished, by being stripped of their sacerdotal habits, and condemned to cut grass for the royal elephants. In his wars against the Burmans he was successful in resisting their encroachments, and during the whole of his reign

lost no part of the Siamese territory. In the year 1810, shortly after his accession, the Burmans fitted out a numerous armament for the capture of Junk-Ceylon, of which they took temporary possession; but a superior Siamese army having assembled, the Burmans were overpowered, and compelled to surrender at discretion. On this occasion the principal chiefs were beheaded, and the inferior prisoners carried off as slaves to Bangkok, where we saw some of the survivors working in chains. This is the last transaction of any moment which has taken place in the incessant warfare of these irreconcilable nations, who, however, except when restrained by the inclemency of the rainy season, when the country is inundated and impassable, are perpetually engaged in a system of petty hostilities on the frontier, consisting in inroads and incursions, the chief object of which is, the seizure of the peaceable inhabitants, for the purpose of carrying them off as slaves.

This Prince not only lost no part of the territory which he had inherited, but in the first year of his reign added considerably to his kingdom by the acquisition of the fertile and extensive Kambojan province of Ba-ta-bang. The late King of Siam, after an illness of a few days, died of a strangury on the 20th day of July, 1824. On the same day, his eldest but illegitimate son, the Prince Kroma-Chiat, ascended the throne without opposition; and notwithstanding

the defect in his title, and the frequency of such occurrences in the commencement of a new reign, the succession was not attended by any acts of proscription or bloodshed. His legitimate brother, a young man about nineteen years of age, and the presumptive heir to the throne, withdrew to a convent, according to custom, to save his life and liberty.

I obtained the following details, respecting the trade of Siam, during my stay at Bangkok, or afterwards at Singapore, from the communications of Siamese and Chinese traders. The inland and coasting trade is very considerable: the principal part of this domestic traffic is carried on on the Menam and its branches, and the produce is carried in flat boats, or on large rafts of bamboo. The upper part of the Menam where it begins to be navigable, is practicable in the months of August and September. Boats which quit Lao in these months, do not arrive at Bangkok until November and December, when the river is crowded with them. Grain, salt, cotton, sapan-wood, oil, and timber, are brought to the capital by this mode of conveyance. Elephants generally constitute the land carriage, and are especially much employed in carrying goods in the mountainous and uncultivated parts of the country. The distant inland traffic of the Siamese

is with Lao, Kamboja, the Chinese province of Yu-nan, and with the Malayan peninsula. From Lao there are imported stic-lac, benjamin, some raw silk, ivory and bees-wax, with horns and hides; and the exportation to that country consists of salt, salt-fish, and Chinese, Indian, and European manufactures. Between the river Menam, and the great river of Kamboja, there is water-carriage all the way by the river Ban-pakung, which in the season of the rains has generally a depth of five cubits, and in the dry season from a cubit to a cubit and a half, being therefore navigable during the former for boats of considerable burthen, and at all times for small boats. The importations from Kamboja into Siam consist of gamboge, cardamums, stic-lac, varnish, raw hides, horns, and ivory. The inland intercourse between Siam and China is conducted through Lao and Yu-nan. These countries are divided from each other by a strong natural barrier of mountains and forests, over which goods are transported with difficulty by small horses. The imports from China in this quarter, I am told, consist of coarse Chinese woollens, some English broad-cloths, pins, needles, and other descriptions of hardware, with some gold, copper, and lead.

The traffic between the countries lying on the shores of the straits of Malacca and bay of Bengal, with the Siamese capital, is conducted by

three different routes over the mountains of the peninsula. The first of these lies between Queda and Sungora; the second, the most frequented, between Trang and Ligor; and the third, between Pun-pin, opposite to Junk-Ceylon and Chai-ya. The land part of the journey is from five to seven days on elephants, the only description of carriage made use of. When the goods reach the shore of the gulf of Siam, they are shipped in boats for the capital. By these routes are brought to Bangkok tin and ivory from Junk-Ceylon, esculent swallows' nests, opium, Indian and British cotton goods, with some miscellaneous British manufactures. In 1821, there were exported from Prince of Wales's Island to Siam opium and European and Indian piece goods to the value of 122,200 Spanish dollars, of which by far the largest part went by the channels now alluded to.

Of the foreign trade of Siam, the most important branch is that with China. This is wholly carried on in vessels of Chinese form, navigated by Chinese, but the greater portion of them built in Siam. As far as Siam is concerned, the whole of the Chinese trade centres in Bangkok, with the exception of a few junks which trade to Sungora and Ligor. The ports of China which carry on trade with Siam, are Canton, Kiangmui, and Changlim, in the province of Quanton; Amoy, or Emwi, in Fokien; Limpo, or Nimpo, in Che-kiang; with Siang-

hai, and Sao-cheu, in Kiang-nan; besides several ports of the great island of Hai-nan. These junks are expected in Siam in the following order. Those of the island of Hai-nan usually arrive in January, and those from the provinces of Canton, Fokien, and Che-kiang, in the latter end of February and down to the beginning of April. They all sail from the Menam in the months of June and July, when the south-west monsoon is at its strength, and of course there is but one voyage performed yearly. I am told, however, that the junks occasionally make short voyages on the coast of China in the intermediate time between their arrival there, and their proceeding on a new voyage to Siam. The imports from China are very numerous, consisting of what are called in commercial language "assorted cargoes." The following is a list of the principal commodities: coarse earthenware and porcelain, spelter, quicksilver, tea, lacksoy (vermicelli), dried fruits, raw silk, crapes, satins and other silk fabrics, nankeens, shoes, fans, umbrellas, writing-paper, sacrificial paper, incense rods, and many other minor articles. Not the least valuable part of the importations are passengers.

The exports from Siam are also very various, but the following list comprehends the most considerable: black pepper, sugar, tin, cardamums, eagle-wood, sapan-wood, red mangrove bark, rose-

wood for furniture and cabinet work, cotton, ivory, stic-lac, rice, areca-nuts, salt-fish, the hides and skins of oxen, buffaloes, elephants, rhinoceros, deer, tigers, leopards, otters, civet cats, the pangolin; of snakes, and rays, with the belly-shell of a species of land tortoise; the horns of the buffalo, ox, deer, and rhinoceros; the bones of the ox, buffalo, elephant, rhinoceros, and tiger; dried deers' sinews, the feathers of the pelican, of several species of stork, of the peacock and kingfisher, &c. and finally esculent swallows' nests.

The commercial intercourse between Siam and China has existed since the earliest acquaintance of Europeans with these countries, but it has become considerable only since the accession of the Prince who ascended or usurped the throne of Siam, on the expulsion of the Burmans in the year 1769, and who was himself of the half Chinese blood, as already stated. La Loubere, who visited Siam one hundred and thirty-five years before our own mission to it, estimated the whole Chinese in the country at only between three and four thousand, and from other authorities the Chinese trade does not appear to have exceeded a few junks annually. "All foreign intercourse in Siam is viewed as coming under the head of commerce, and this applies even to that with China, although the King of Siam professes himself to be a vassal of that

empire. This vassalage, however, is purely nominal, but under pretext of it the Siamese Court is enabled every year to send two large junks of fifteen thousand piculs, or between nine hundred and one thousand tons each, to Canton, which, at the expense of a few trifling presents, are exempted from the payment of all duties. Ambassadors proceed on these annually to Canton, and there pay their respects to the Viceroy of that province, and every third year repair to Pekin, after being rendered worthy of that honour by being invested with a Chinese title of nobility, and assuming the Chinese costume. When the embassy is to the Viceroy of Canton, the presents consist of the staple products of Siam,—such as tin, pepper, and sugar; but when to the Emperor, there is added to them a tree of gold and of silver, resembling the similar tributes paid to the King of Siam himself by his Malayan vassals.

No adequate data exist for offering a correct account of the extent of the trade between Siam and China; but a probable estimate of it may be formed.

The Siamese junks trading to the province of Canton are as follow:—three large junks, of from 10,000 to 15,000 piculs each, trade to the port of Canton; fifty, from 2000 to 5000, to the same place; and two of 7000 to Changlim. The Siamese junks trading to the province of Fokien,

amount to two of 6000 piculs each; those proceeding to the port of Nimpo amount to eight, measuring from 5000 to 8000 piculs each. The junks proceeding to the province of Kiang-nan, amount to one junk of 5000 piculs, for the port of Sao-cheu; and fifteen junks, from 5000 to 8000, for that of Siang-hai. A fair average of this branch of the Chinese trade of Siam, will not give less for the whole than 393,000 piculs, or 24,562 tons.

Besides this trade, conducted in what may be called Siamese bottoms, an inferior, but still a considerable one is carried on in similar vessels belonging to China. From the port of Kiang-mui in the province of Canton, there come five junks, measuring from 3000 to 5000 piculs; from Changlim, one junk of 5000 piculs; and from Amoy, two junks of 3000 each. With the ports of Canton, Nimpo, and Siang-hai, there is no trade to Siam under the Chinese flag. All the junks carrying on the trade between the island of Hai-nan, which is a dependency of the province of Quantong, belong to China. They are small vessels measuring from 2000 to 3500 piculs, and seldom less than fifty come yearly. Taking the average of this branch of the trade, the whole will probably not be overrated at 168,500 piculs, or 10,531 tons. The numerical account of the whole trade between Siam and China will, ac-

cording to this statement, be about 140 junks, and the tonnage employed will not be less than 561,500 piculs, or 35,093 tons.

No accurate details can be furnished respecting the value of the trade which Siam carries on with China; but some interesting particulars may be stated, which will assist us in forming a general notion of it. The junks belonging to Siam are all built at Bangkok, and at that place commonly from six to eight of the largest description are launched annually. They are built under the direction of a Chinese head-carpenter, the ordinary workmen being usually Siamese. The frame-work is commonly of the wood called by the Malays marbao (*metrosideros amboinensis*), and the deck and planks of teak the *tectona grandis*). The cost of one of the larger description ready for sea, is estimated at twenty-five ticals per ton, or about 3*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* Assuming this rate for the whole, the value of the Siamese shipping trading to China will be 614,050 ticals, or 76,756*l.*

The shipping belonging to China carrying on the Siamese trade, are built at the respective ports of that country from which they sail, and cost differently at each. They are built of inferior woods to the Siamese junks,—I think, generally of fir,—their rudder, anchor, and masts being commonly of suitable wood procured in Kamboja, Siam, or the Malayan islands. At Amoy

in Fokien, the cost of ship-building is at the rate of above forty-two Spanish dollars per ton; but at Changlim in Canton, only thirty-two Spanish dollars. These Chinese junks undergo a thorough repair every four years, and such repairs are indefinitely carried on until the junk be finally lost by shipwreck, for it appears not to be the practice in any case to condemn a vessel and break her up.

The great majority of the mariners navigating these junks of both classes are Chinese; for Siamese are found only on board those which trade to the port of Canton,—this nation being, it appears, like Europeans, strictly excluded from all other parts of China. A Chinese junk is manned with an extraordinary proportion of hands, if compared to European vessels—a circumstance which chiefly arises from the awkwardness of the rudder, the cable and anchor, and the weight and clumsiness of the enormous square-sails which are made use of. A junk of 8000 piculs, or about five hundred tons, requires a crew of ninety men, and the proportion of hands is still greater for vessels of smaller size. The officers and crew, in the larger junks at least, are commonly paid in the following manner. The commander, or *Chinchu*, gets no fixed salary, but receives a hundred piculs of tonnage in both the outward and homeward voyage, has the cabin accommodation for passengers at his disposal,

worth from 150 to 200 dollars, and gets a commission commonly of ten per cent. on the net profits of the voyage. The pilot receives 200 dollars for the voyage, with 50 piculs of tonnage; the accountant, 100 dollars and 50 piculs; the captains of the steerage, 15 piculs of freight; and the captains of the anchor and the hold, 9 piculs each. Each seaman receives 7 piculs of freight, and no wages. These proportions apply to a junk of 6000 piculs, but vary a little as the vessel is larger or smaller.

The rates of freight which are charged will show the profits which are expected from these adventures. From Bangkok to Changlim in the province of Canton, the freight paid for tin is two and a half dollars per picul; for esculent swallows' nests, ten dollars per picul; and for such commodities as tripang or bech-de-mer, three dollars. All gruff commodities, such as dye-woods, barks, &c., are constantly taken on speculation by the owners of the junk. The return freights are,—for earthenware, tea, and other bulky articles, one Spanish dollar per picul; and for such fine articles as wrought and unwrought silks, five Spanish dollars. The freights to and from Amoy are a good deal higher.

Passengers form the most valuable importation from China into Siam. The rate of passage-money between Bangkok and Amoy is eight Spanish dollars, and between Bangkok and

Changlim six Spanish dollars,—ready money in both cases. The commander furnishes provisions. A single junk has been known to bring 1200 passengers to Bangkok; and I am told that the annual immigrations into that place may be moderately estimated at seven thousand. The staple articles of import are coarse chinaware, coarse teas, and raw and wrought silks; but the imports do not equal the exports without including a quantity of Chinese silver in ingots. The staple articles of exportation are black pepper, sugar, stic-lac, sapan-wood, cardamums, cotton wool, eagle-wood, rice, hides, and wood for furniture. I give the quantities of some of these as they were stated to me, without however venturing to vouch for their accuracy. The produce of Siam in pepper is 60,000 piculs, and nearly the whole of this goes to China. The production of sugar equals that of pepper, of which about one half is said to be sent thither. The export of stic-lac is given at 16,000 piculs, and the sapan-wood at 30,000; the ivory at 1000 piculs; and the fine cardamums at 500.

The Phraklang informed me that the most profitable part of the trade was that carried on with the ports of Siang-hai, Nimpo, and Sao-cheu; and the least so that with the ports of Canton and Amoy, but especially the latter. It is indeed a fact generally understood, that at the two ports in question the duties are heavier, and the

conduct of the public officers more vexatious, than in any other part of China.

The remaining branches of the external trade of Siam are all conducted nearly in the same manner and with the same class of vessels, and may be comprehended under one head. These branches consist of the coasting trade, which Bangkok, the capital, carries on with the Siamese ports on the eastern and western side of the Gulf —the trade with Kamboja and Cochin China, and the trade with the different countries of the Malayan Archipelago. Bangkok carries on a coasting trade with the ports of Champon, Chaiya, Bandon, Ligor, Sungora, and Talung, on the western coast of the Gulf, and with Ban-pa-soi, Ban-pa-kung, Bang-prah, Ban-pomung, Rayong, Passeh, Chantabun, Tung-yai, and Ko-kong on the eastern coast. The great object of this trade is to collect produce for the Chinese market,—such as pepper, cardamums, gamboge, ivory, eagle-wood, dye-woods, and barks. A considerable number of the junks employed in this traffic belong to the King, and are engaged in carrying from Chantabun and Tung-yai the royal tributes in pepper and other commodities. It may here be remarked, that the intercourse between Bangkok and the eastern coast of the Gulf, which is sheltered by a long chain of islands, may be carried on without interruption nearly throughout the year, the monsoons opposing no serious obstacle:

The Siamese trade with Kamboja is conducted with the ports of Pongsom, Kang-kao, Tek-sia, and Kamao; here the exports from Siam consist of Chinese, European, and Indian manufactures, with iron; and the imports of gamboge, cardamums, ivory, hides, and horns, with dried deers' flesh, and salt-fish, chiefly for the Chinese market.

The Siamese trade with Cochin China is carried on with the ports of Sai-gun or Long-nai, Sincheu or Fai-fo, and the capital Hué, but by far to the greatest extent with the first-named place. The number of junks conducting this trade is from forty to fifty, all small. The exports from Siam consist of unwrought iron, iron pans, tobacco, opium, and some European Chinese goods. They take back mats for bags and sails, wrought and unwrought silks, &c.

The trade with the different countries of the Malayan Archipelago has within the last few years been greatly extended, and become indeed of very considerable consequence. It is conducted with the following ports:—Patani, Kalantan, Tringano, Pahang, Rhio, Singapore, Malacca, Penang, Batavia, Samarang, Cheribon, Palembang, and Pontianak. In this intercourse the staple exports of Siam are sugar, salt, oil, and rice; to which may be added the minor articles of stic-lac, iron pans, coarse earthenware, hogs' lard, &c. The returns are British and Indian piece

goods, opium, with a little glass-ware, and some British woollens from the European settlements, with commodities suited for the Chinese market, —such as pepper, tin, dragons' blood, rattans, bech-de-mer, esculent swallows' nests, and Malayan camphor from the native ports. In 1824, the Siamese junks which visited the ports in the straits of Malacca, and all of which finally cleared from Singapore, amounted to forty-four. This is undoubtedly at present the most extensive branch of the foreign trade of Siam, after that with China.

The junks carrying on the different branches of the trade just described, are all built and owned in Siam, and are formed and equipped in a manner considerably different from the junks intended for the Chinese trade, and such as to make them more manageable, and more cheaply navigated. Their ordinary size runs from 1000 to 3000 piculs, although there be a few which are as large as between 6000 and 7000. The proportion of the crew to the tonnage is smaller than in the junks of Chinese construction, and may be estimated at about sixteen hands to the hundred tons. In the coasting-trade, these crews are partly Chinese and partly Siamese; but in the more distant and difficult navigation, almost exclusively Chinese.

The whole number of junks carrying on the branches of trade now referred to, were estimated

to me at about two hundred; which, from what I had an opportunity of observing personally, I am not inclined to consider as an exaggerated statement, since nearly a fourth part of the amount is made up by the trade of the Straits of Malacca alone. Taking the average of each junk at 2250 piculs, the whole of this trade will amount to 450,000 piculs, or 28,125 tons.

After the data now given, a conjecture may be hazarded respecting the number of mariners engaged in the whole external trade of Siam. The Chinese trade of Siam conducted in Siamese bottoms has been estimated at 24,562 tons, which, at the moderate estimate of twenty hands to every hundred tons, will give 4912 mariners. The coasting-trade with that of Kamboja, Cochin China, and the Malayan countries, at sixteen men to each hundred tons, will give 4500; so that the whole mariners belonging to Siam will in this manner amount to 9412. If to these be added the mariners' navigating vessels belonging to China, of which the tonnage was estimated at 10,531, and whose numbers will amount to 2106 hands, the whole mariners carrying on the external trade of Siam will amount to 11,518. This statement, as far as it can be relied upon, is calculated to convey a respectable impression of the foreign trade of Bangkok; which indeed, I have every reason to believe, far exceeds that of any other Asiatic port not settled by Europeans,

with the single exception of the port of Canton in China.

In point of climate, considerable variety must necessarily exist in a country which extends from the seventh to at least the twentieth degree of North latitude, and which at the same time presents much diversity of physical aspect, exhibiting in some situations extensive alluvial plains, subject to periodical inundation; and in others, hilly tracts and extensive ranges of mountains; commonly covered with primeval forests. I can speak only of the climate of Bangkok, to which my experience was confined. As in other tropical countries not distant from the Equator, the year in the latitude of the Siamese capital consists of two seasons only,—a wet and a dry. In 1822, during our visit, the periodical rains commenced early in May; they were at first light, but about the middle of that month rain fell in torrents, accompanied by very tempestuous weather; and this state of things continued until the beginning of July, when serene and moderate weather followed, and continued without interruption until the middle of August, when we quitted the Gulf. In March and April we also experienced similarly fine weather, and were informed by Europeans, who had resided in the country, that the climate in the colder months was moderate and agreeable

throughout. In April and May, before the rains had set in, the thermometer in the shade rose daily to from 95 to 96 of Farenheit. In December and January, we were told that it occasionally fell to 72. These may be considered the extremes of heat and cold in this country. Of the winds it is scarcely necessary to speak. As in other Indian countries to the north of the Equator, a north-east wind prevails throughout the winter, and a south-west throughout the summer solstice, leaving a period of about six weeks of inconstant winds and calms at each of the changes.

The Siamese themselves, in reference to the rise and fall of the Menam within the tract of inundation, give the following account of their seasons. In the sixth month of their year, generally corresponding to the end of April and beginning of May, the rainy season commences, and the ceremony of the Sovereign holding the plough on the 6th day of the bright half of this moon is intended to commemorate that event as well as the commencement of rural labour. In the seventh month the rain is heavier, and the greatest fall takes place in the eighth, ninth, and tenth months. In the eleventh month the rain is light, and about the middle of the twelfth it ceases altogether. The Menam at Bangkok does not begin to rise until the tenth month: it continues to do so during the eleventh, twelfth,

and first months, when the inundation is at its height. In the second month the waters subside, and they are at the lowest during the fourth, fifth, and six months. Although the Menam does not begin to rise at Bangkok until the tenth month, it commences farther to the North much sooner, and towards the northern frontier as early as the seventh month. The greatest rise of the river is eighteen feet.

The climate of Bangkok, although the heat be great in the warm months, the place itself low, the surrounding country subject to periodical inundation, and covered with fields of marsh rice, is far from being unhealthy. Our party amounting, including the ship's company, to one hundred and thirty persons, resided for four months on the banks of the Menam, not very conveniently lodged, and yet in all this period, commonly considered the most unhealthy season in tropical countries, no death occurred from any complaint contracted by the climate, nor indeed was any one affected with a serious malady which could be connected with our situation. The natives of Bangkok themselves consider the country healthy, and their frames, robust and vigorous for an Indian people, appear to afford evidence that they enjoy the advantage of a wholesome climate.

The geology and mineralogy of Siam are as yet almost unexplored, and on this subject I

have little better to offer than the information given to me by the natives of the country, always vague and uncertain. The tin formation consisting, I believe, always of granite, and which is well ascertained to pervade the whole Malay peninsula, even from within a few miles of Cape Romania, the most southern extremity of the continent of Asia, extends through the Siamese territory as far on the coast of the bay of Bengal as Tavoy, in about the fourteenth degree of North latitude, and on that of the Gulf of Siam as far as Cham-pon, in about the eleventh degree. The ore found within this wide range, as far as has been ascertained, is always common tin-stone, or oxide of tin, occurring in alluvial formations, technically called "streams." The richest mines of Siam exist in the island of Junk Ceylon, and here the ore is found in precisely the same situation as in the island of Banca, and the mines are probably not inferior to those of the latter in fertility. The other places in which mines are wrought are Sungora, Mardilung, Ligore, Cham-pon, Ma-ya, and Tavoy.

Gold, which appears in the Malay peninsula to have as wide a geographic distribution and a similar geognostic situation with tin, is also found under the same circumstances within the Siamese territory. The places in which, according to my information, gold is obtained, are

Bang-ta-pan, and Ra-chan. At the first place, which is in about the twelfth degree of North latitude, the ore is said to be above nineteen carats fine. The whole quantity produced, however, is not sufficient for the consumption of the country, owing to the quantity expended in gilding temples and images; in consequence of which, quantities are imported from the Malayan countries.

Iron however, of all the metals, occurs in the greatest relative abundance in Siam. The mines of it all existing at a great distance from the capital, we had no means of determining what particular ores of it were used for smelting; but that the mines were fertile, appeared sufficiently evident from the low price at which the metal itself is sold at Bangkok, and which for cast-iron does not exceed a dollar and a half the picul, nor for malleable iron above double that amount. The most productive mines of iron are in the districts of Pi-si-luk, La-kon-sa-wan, Ra-heng, and Metak, all situated on or near the Menam.

Copper, lead, zinc, and antimony, are also found in Siam, which, from the list now given, will appear to be no less distinguished for the variety and abundance of its mineral, than it is acknowledged to be for its vegetable productions. Copper mines were attempted to be worked by the French in the time of Louis XIV., and lately to a small extent by the Chinese. The mineral is

found in a low range of primitive mountains near Louvo or Nuk-bu-ri, in about the fifteenth degree of North latitude. Lead appears to be found more abundantly. The mines exist at a place called Pak-prek, in the mountains of the barbarous tribe of Lawá. They are worked only by this people, who produce yearly about two thousand piculs of the metal. This fact would seem to prove satisfactorily that the mines must be both fertile and accessible; for had the case been otherwise, the metal would not have been procurable at all, through the unskilful labour of so rude a people. Zinc and antimony are found in the district of Rap-ri, to the eastward of the Menam. The mines of the first have not hitherto been wrought, but the ore of antimony is smelted in small quantities, and, it is said, although the fact appears very doubtful, used by the Chinese manufacturers of cast-iron utensils to assist the fusion of the iron. Of the ores of the different metals now mentioned, we obtained no specimens, and therefore I am unable to give any description of them.

The only gems which are ascertained to be minerals of Siam, are the sapphire, the Oriental ruby, and the Oriental topaz. These are all found in the hills of Chan-ta-bun, about the latitude of 12 degrees, and on the eastern side of the Gulf. The gems, from what we could learn, are obtained by digging up the alluvial soil at the bottom of the

hills, and washing it. The gravel obtained after this operation is brought to the capital for examination. A quantity of it was offered to us for sale, which consisted principally of the peculiar mineral called *uclase*, in which were to be found a few minute specimens of blue sapphire. Both the ruby and sapphire of Siam are greatly inferior in quality to those of Ava. Several specimens were shown to us during our stay, but none of them of any value. The mines of Chan-ta-bun, notwithstanding this, are a rigidly guarded monopoly on the part of the King.

The *botany* of Siam and its dependent provinces, would afford a rich and varied field to the scientific observer that had time and opportunity to examine it,—means, however, which are not for a long time likely to be at the disposal of any European capable of availing himself of them, owing to the singularly suspicious and jealous character of the Government of the country. Of the interior we ourselves saw very little, and what we did see, differed in no essential respect from other Indian countries; for the neighbourhood of Bangkok is a low, tame, and fertile tract, cultivated with ordinary tropical productions, and affording few novel objects for the examination of the botanist.

I shall confine myself, therefore, to giving a very brief sketch of the useful vegetable productions of Siam, whether agricultural or other-

wise. Of the *Cereal Gramineæ*, the only plants which we observed to be cultivated in Siam, were common rice, oryza sativa, called in the Siamese language Kao-san, and Indian corn, zea mays, called by the Siamese Kao-pot. The principal varieties of rice cultivated are the upland and marsh grains;—each, but especially the latter, consisting of many sub-varieties, as in other Indian countries not distant from the Equator, where this grain has been long and generally cultivated. The climate of Siam, and its soil within the tract of inundation, appear to be admirably suited for the production of rice, and to be inferior in this respect to no country in the world. With the exception of Bengal, Siam unquestionably exports more rice than any country in Asia. I was informed that in the rice-grounds in the vicinity of Bangkok, a return of forty-fold for the seed was expected by the husbandmen. The certainty with which the crops of this grain are yielded from year to year, is probably of still more consequence than their occasional abundance. The conviction of this fact has produced a salutary influence even upon the jealous and arbitrary Government of Siam, which, in opposition to the practice of other Asiatic states, generally permits the free exportation of rice, no doubt from a long habitual experience of the safety of this policy. Maize is extensively cultivated in Siam, particularly in the mountain dis-

tricts, but does not form in this, no more than in any other Asiatic country, an article of exportation, being a commodity of too little value to bear the heavy freights of Indian navigation.

Of leguminous plants, the *Phaseolus Radiatus*, the *Phaseolus Max*, and the *Arachis Hypogaea*, are the most commonly cultivated, and the first is exported in considerable quantities to China and the Malay islands. Of farinaceous roots, the Siamese have the usual varieties cultivated in other tropical countries, the most useful and valuable of which is the *Convolvulus Batatas*, or sweet potatoe.

Of palms, the coco and areca alone are extensively cultivated in the lower parts of Siam. The first, however, only is remarkable for its fecundity, and affords an extensive produce of oil for exportation at very low prices.

The fruits of Siam, or at least of the neighbourhood of Bangkok, are excellent and various, surpassing, according to the experience of our party,—and one or other of us had been accustomed to the fruits of Bengal, Bombay, the Malay peninsula, Ceylon and Java,—those of all other parts of India. The Siamese themselves consume great quantities of fruit, and the whole neighbourhood of Bangkok is one forest of fruit-trees,—having, it appears from the French accounts, been remarkable for its orchards at an early period, and affording in the time of the

French embassies, the principal supply for Yuthia, the then capital. The most exquisite fruits of Siam are the mango, the mangustin, the orange, the durian, the lichi, and, if the taste of an European who is a stranger to tropical fruits were consulted, the pine-apple might be added. All these fruits, and many inferior ones, were in season during our stay in Siam, from April to July. It may be considered as somewhat singular, that the mangustin (*Garcinia Mangostana*) and the durian (*Durios*), which refuse to bear fruit in all the British provinces in Hindostan, yield abundantly in parallel latitudes in Siam, and even as far north as Korat, between the 16th and 17th degrees of latitude.

Both these trees, it would appear by the name given to them by the Siamese, and which are pure Malay, must be exotics. The lichi (*Scytalia Litchi*), which is in season in Siam for a few weeks towards the end of March and beginning of April, has, as in other countries, been introduced from China; and as it is not, like the two last-mentioned fruits, taken notice of by the European writers of the seventeenth century, who treat of Siam, I presume it to be a modern introduction, although I could not ascertain the exact period when it was first cultivated in this country. It is singular how very few native fruits of delicate flavour any one country can boast of;—Siam, for example, which has now so rich and

varied an assemblage of choice fruits, owes the best of them to foreign countries. Besides those already mentioned, Siam seems indebted to European intercourse for the guava (*Psidium Pomiferum*) and the Papia fig (*Carica Papaja*); the first of which is called, in the language of the country, the fruit of Malacca (*Maloko*), and the second, the banana of the Franks (*Kloa-Farang*).

The sugar-cane has been known in Siam, as in other parts of India, time out of mind; but its culture, to useful and extensive purposes, does not date beyond twelve years before the period of our visit to the country, and originated in the industry and enterprise of the Chinese settlers, encouraged by some liberal concessions yielded to or extorted by them at the time from the Siamese Government. The result, in the year 1822, was a production of sugar, generally the whitest and best in India, to the extent of above 60,000 piculs, or above eight millions of pounds, exported to China, the western parts of Hindostan, Persia, Arabia, and Europe. The districts in which the sugar-cane is raised are Bam-pa-soi, La-kon-chai-se, Bang-kong, and Pe-triu, all within the fertile valley of the Menam. The cane is planted in the seventh month, or June; cut in the first month, or December; and sugar is produced in the market of Bangkok in the second month, or January. The cultivators of the cane are always

Siamese; but the manufacturers of sugar invariably Chinese.

Black pepper is produced only in the districts of Chan-ta-bun and Tung-yai, about the 11th and 12th degrees of latitude, which, it may be remarked, coincides with the countries which yield the same commodity in Western India. The Siamese pepper is superior in quality to that of the Malayan countries, but scarcely known in any foreign market, except that of China. The annual quantity produced is about eight millions of pounds, of which two-thirds are delivered to the King of Siam, who pays to the cultivator about eight ticals the picul, and vends it, after being conveyed to Bangkok, at about double that amount.* I do not know whether or not black pepper, *Piper nigrum*, be an indigenous plant of Siam; but from its being produced in a climate and situation similar to Ma-

* The following may be considered as a probable estimate of the whole pepper produce of the world. I give it in piculs of about 133⅓ pounds of avoirdupois, at which rate the total will be 50,062,500 pounds:—

Produce of the west coast of the island of Sumatra	150,000
East coast of ditto	60,000
Islands in the Straits of Malacca	27,000
Malay Peninsula	28,000
Borneo	20,000
Siam	60,000
Malabar	30,000
Total Piculs	375,000

labar, where it is known to be a native, as well as from its name, in the language of the country, viz. Siamese pepper, *Prik-thai*, it is not improbable that it is.

The same parts of the country which produce pepper, with the adjacent districts of Kamboja, afford another product common to them with the coast of Malabar, viz. cardamums. These in the market are of two qualities, varying in price from fifty to three hundred ticals the picul. The best are occasionally sold in China as high as five hundred dollars the picul. According to the accounts rendered to us, the cardamums of Siam and Kamboja are of two species, the productions of two distinct plants, in accordance with which they are known by two different names in the Siamese and Kambojan languages, —those of the first quality being called Kra-wan, and those of the second Ri-u. The forests producing them are royal preserves, and strictly guarded. Although making repeated inquiries, we had no opportunity of examining the plants either in Siam or Kamboja, and several trials which I afterwards made in Singapore to propagate them from the seed entirely failed; so that we had no opportunity of determining whether they be new species of *Amomum*, or only a variety of the ordinary *Amomum Cardamomum*. The capsules of the best description were white, about three times the size of the finest Malabar

cardamums, and the seeds highly aromatic. It is not easy to account for the extraordinary request in which the Kambojan cardamums are held by the Chinese; but it probably arises out of a similar caprice with that which induces them to put an arbitrary value to Malayan camphor, esculent swallows' nests, and similar commodities.

Tobacco, which is known to the Siamese by the singular term "medicine," is very generally cultivated throughout the country, but in the greatest perfection in the districts of Chan-ta-bun and Bam-pa-soi. It is one of the striking indications of improvement among the modern Siamese, that this plant, which used not many years ago to be largely imported from Java, no longer continues to be so, but on the contrary is exported in considerable quantity to Cochin China, and to several of the Malayan countries.

Several descriptions of cotton, (Fai in the Siamese language,) all herbaceous and annual plants, are grown in Siam; but whether the common *Gossypium Herbaceum*, and *Gossypiam Indicum*, reared in other Asiatic countries, or other species, we had no opportunity of learning. Cotton does not thrive within the tract of inundation, and is principally grown in the provinces of Ligor, Pak-prek, and other upland districts. That of the first-named country is of inferior value. We observed large importations of cotton brought into Bangkok, which, notwithstanding its high

price, viz. from eight to thirteen ticals per picul in the seed, is exported to the island of Hainan, and to the annual extent, it is said, of twenty thousand piculs, freed from the seed.

A gum resembling benzoin, and hitherto confounded with it, is a native product of the Siamese territories. The Siamese call it kam-nyan, which is nearly the Malayan term, and represent it as the spontaneous product of a forest tree growing in Lao, in the districts of Raheng, Chiang-mai, and La-kon, as far north as the twentieth degree of latitude. From this description, the tree is probably a different plant from the *Styrax Benzoin* of Sumatra, which grows close to the Equator, and is an object of cultivation. As the Siamese gum is comparatively cheap and abundant at the capital, no doubt the tree yields it plentifully.

That portion of Kamboja which now belongs to Siam, and some parts of the Siamese territory bordering upon it, afford the well-known medicine and pigment, gamboge, and indeed, I believe, are the only parts of the world that do so. The districts yielding gamboge correspond generally with those affording pepper and cardamums; that is to say, the countries on the east coast of the Gulf of Siam, from the latitude of ten to twelve degrees. The gum is obtained from a species of Garcinia, to which it gives name, by making incisions in the bark of the forest trees,

from which it exudes, and is collected in vessels suspended or affixed to them. In these it soon assumes a concrete form, and is fit for the market without farther preparation. The districts which afford this production, deliver to the Kings of Siam, Kamboja, and Cochin China, fixed quantities of it yearly as tax or tribute. In the Siamese and Kambojan languages, this production is called Rong, from whence is evidently derived the Portuguese name Rom. The derivation of our own, and of the Latin name, is sufficiently obvious.

Another singular production, of nearly the same countries, is Agila, eagle, or aloes-wood, called by the Siamese *Kisná*. The large forest tree which affords this production seems to exist in all hilly countries, from the 24th degree of latitude down to the Equator. The scented wood is, from all accounts, the result of a deceased action in the tree. It appears to be more or less frequent according to soil and climate, and from the same causes to differ materially in quality. It is produced both in the greatest quantity and the greatest perfection in the countries and islands on the east coast of the Gulf of Siam, from Bang-pasoi in 13° 30′ downwards. The late Dr. Roxburgh introduced the plant into the botanical garden of Calcutta, from the hills to the eastward of the district of Sylhet, and described it under the name of Aquillaria Agalocha. It is of the

class and order *Decandria Monogynia*, has an *umbel* for its inflorescense, a *drupe* for its fruit, and the leaf is *lanceolate*. The foreign names of this plant afford a curious example of corruption. The original one is Sanscrit, and correctly written "aguru." From this is derived the Malayan name "agila;" from which, in its turn, are derived the following European corruptions:—agila wood, aguillaria, agalocha, bois d'aigle, and eagle-wood.

The *Cæsalpinia Sappan*, or sapan tree, called *Fang* by the Siamese, valuable for the red dye of its wood, is a very abundant production of the Siamese forests, where it grows to the height of fifty or sixty feet, and often to the diameter of two feet. The places remarkable for its production, are the mountains of the peninsula lying between the 10th and 13th degrees of N. latitude. Sapan wood, in point of quantity, if not of value, is the most considerable of all the exports of Siam. It is principally sent to China, but of late a very considerable quantity of it has been exported to Europe and Bengal.

A tree affording a valuable timber, and known to the Siamese by the name of *Wai-deng*, or red wood, is produced in the forests of *Pe-tri-u*, and in those of *Ra-yung* and *Bang-po-mung*, between the 12th and 13th degrees of latitude, on the eastern coast of the Gulf. This wood, although called by the Portuguese Christians, *Pao Rosa*, or rose wood, bears no resemblance to the fancy or

ornamental woods known under this name in Europe. The tree grows to a large size. Its wood, as its name imports, is of a red colour, fine grained, and admitting a good polish. The Chinese export it largely for cabinet work. We had no opportunity of examining its place in the botanical system, nor do I believe it has hitherto been determined.

The Teak forests of Siam appear, by all accounts, to be considerable. It is almost superfluous to say, that the Teak of Siam is the *Tectona* of botanists, and that there is but one species of the genus. Of the timber, at least, there are two varieties in Siam, according to the statement of the natives, differing in degrees of hardness. The harder kind, which is the most valued, is produced in the hilly countries of Raheng and Chang-mai; and the soft, or inferior description, in the low country of Pisaluk. No Teak appears to be produced in the lower provinces of Siam, nor, from all accounts, farther south than about sixteen degrees North latitude. The situation of the Teak forests of Siam, in fact, appears to correspond in latitude with the best and most abundant of those of Ava.

Teak wood is much used by the Siamese themselves in the construction of junks, and, above all, in that of their numerous temples. Very little of it has hitherto been exported, nor is there likely to be much until the business of ship-building in

our settlements in the Straits of Malacca shall be established on an extensive scale; when, as in the parallel cases of Rangoon and Calcutta, Teak will, in all probability, become a valuable article of trade in our intercourse with the Siamese. In the meanwhile, persons of all descriptions in Siam, having a licence from the Government, are permitted to fell Teak, and deal in it as an article of trade. For the use of the capital, it is floated down the Menam in the eighth and ninth months of the Siamese year, and commonly arrives in the ninth and tenth.

The zoology of Siam, except in its more ordinary and familiar features, is an unexplored field. Of carnivorous quadrupeds, Siam furnishes the Bear, which I believe to be the same found in Borneo, and the Malay peninsula. This was formerly called the Ursus Malayanus; but my friend Dr. Horsefield, the greatest discoverer and the most accurate observer of all writers on Indian zoology, considers it to be a new genus, and describes it under the name of Helarctos. A species of Otter is very generally found about the rivers of Siam. We saw them even at Bangkok; their skins are bought up by the Chinese, and exported to China. This I believe to be the Leutra Leptonyx of Dr. Horsefield.

Of the canine family, the Dog is the only species known in Siam. According to the Siamese, it exists in some of their forests in a wild

state, and is said by them to burrow like the fox and jackal. The domestic Dog, an ugly prick-eared cur of considerable size, and commonly only of three colours, black, brown, and white, is frequent, to the extent of a nuisance, in all the Siamese towns and villages. It is, as in other parts of the East, unowned and unappropriated; and as the natives, from religious motives, do not disturb it, and have not, like the inhabitants of Mohammedan countries, a repugnance to this animal, it is very familiar, and voluntarily accompanies them when they go abroad. The Wolf, the Jackal, the Hyena, and the Fox are, as far as is yet known, strangers in Siam, as I believe they are in every country from Aracan to China.

Several species of the Civet, or *Viverra*, exist; and the true Civet *(Viverra Civetta)* is reared by the Siamese for the musk which it produces. Of the feline tribe, the species which are known to exist in Siam are the common Cat, in its wild and domesticated state, the royal tiger, and the leopard, both spotted and black. The Tiger and Leopard are extremely frequent in the forests of Siam, but especially the latter. I found in the market of Bangkok, one day, the dressed skin of a handsome animal of the feline tribe. The same animal, it appears, exists in Sumatra, and a live specimen of it was brought home by the late Sir Stamford Raffles. My specimen,

which, from the tip of the nose to that of the tail, measured about five feet and a half, is now at the museum of the India House. The animal has recently been described under the name of *Felis nubilus* and *Felis macroselis*. The skins both of leopards and tigers form a considerable article of exportation to China; but what is more remarkable, *the bones* of the second, which the Chinese consider to be possessed of medicinal qualities.

Of the order of gnawers, the following are ascertained to exist in Siam. The common mouse, the Rat *(Mus decumanus)*, several species of squirrel, and the porcupine *(Hystrix cristata)*. Two specimens were given to us of what appeared to be a new species of mouse or rat. Of this singular little animal, drawings were made under the directions of the late Mr. Finlayson, and are now at the India House. Neither the hare nor rabbit are known in the lower parts of Siam, another singular feature of their zoology.

Among the toothless animals, Siam produces the Pangolin, (*manis pentadactyla*)—the scaly skin of which is to be seen in the shops of Bangkok, prepared for sale to the Chinese; among whom it appears to be used for its alleged medicinal virtues.

We find in Siam the Elephant—the hog—and the Rhinoceros *(Rh. Indicus)*. The Elephant, called in the Siamese language *Chang*, is found in

every part of the Siamese territories, including the Malayan and Kambojan tributaries, and Lao. The finest are found in the forest of Suphan, between the fourteenth and fifteenth degrees of latitude, and to the westward of the capital. Siam has been esteemed the genial land of the Elephant, and among those in which this animal attains the highest perfection. Not being amateurs, the individuals of our party could perceive no sensible difference between them and those of Chittagong and Çochin China. The Siamese elephants, however, appear to have been in high esteem, even in so distant a place as Delhi, in the flourishing periods of the Mogul Government; a circumstance alluded to by Bernier in his interesting history of the Revolution which placed Aurungzebe on the throne. They were in all probability imported into Hindostan from Mergui, being brought to the ports of the Coromandel coast, by the Mohammedan merchants of that country. The use of Elephants is prohibited at the modern capital, except to a few persons of very high rank, chiefly, I presume, because of the inconvenience which would attend the employment of them, on account of the nature of the country. In all other parts of the kingdom they are freely used, both for riding and as beasts of burden. Lanchang, the capital of Lao, takes its name from the number of elephants which are used by its inhabitants, the word in the Siamese

language meaning the place of ten millions of elephants. A native of that town informed me, that they were used for a great many domestic purposes, "even," he added, "for carrying women and fire-wood." Elephant-hunters are employed in Siam to shoot and destroy the males, chiefly on account of their tusks,—an occupation described to be laborious, and somewhat dangerous. Ivory is a royal monopoly; but not one very rigidly enforced. The quantity received yearly by the King is said to amount to no more than four hundred piculs. Not only the ivory, but the hides and bones of the elephant are in request in China, and every year largely exported to that country.

The single-horned Rhinoceros, called Ret in the language of the country, is hunted by the Siamese on account of its hide and horn; and if what was asserted to us at Bangkok be true, that a thousand Rhinoceros' horns are annually exported to China, this animal, comparatively scarce every where, must exist in unusual numbers in Siam. A Rhinoceros' skin brings, weight for weight, nearly double the price of any other hide. The horns are employed by the Chinese for supposed medicinal virtues. Their price depends neither upon their apparent qualities nor size, but upon certain superstitious marks by which the Chinese distinguish them. Thus, a cattie weight of ordinary horns will generally sell for about ten

ticals; whereas a single horn of moderate size, and having the approved marks, has been known to fetch no less than two hundred and forty.

The hog, called Mu in Siamese, an animal which appears to be universally distributed through tropical Asia, exists also in great abundance in the forests of Siam. Through the care of the Chinese, it is extensively bred in the towns; and I have been assured, that at Bangkok no less than two hundred were slaughtered every morning. The lard, prepared with great nicety by the Chinese, is exported to the European settlements of the neighbouring countries.

Of the single-hoofed quadrupeds, the horse (*Ma*, in Siamese) is the only species known in Siam or its dependent provinces; for even the ass, so general in the dry countries of Central and Western Asia, as well as in many parts of China, is here a stranger. The full-sized horse is unknown in every tropical country to the eastward of the Burrumpooter, whether insular or continental, China not excepted. The horses of Siam are ponies under thirteen hands high. Few are reared within Siam Proper. The greater number are produced in the more northerly country of Lao, and a few are said to be imported from the neighbouring Chinese province of Yu-nan.

Of the ruminating quadrupeds, Siam produces, according to the Siamese, seven distinct species of

deer *(Cervus)*, the Goat, the Ox, and the Buffalo. The most common species of deer are the ordinary Stag *(Cervus Elaphus)*, and the Indian Roe *(Cervus muntjac)*. In the southern provinces, the *Chevrotin (Moschus pygmœus* and *Jvanicus* of Buffon) is frequent. The Axis, or spotted deer, and the Antelope, of every species, are, as far as I could understand, unknown. The Goat *(Pe)*, in the wild state, is stated by the Siamese to be found in some of the mountains of their country, and to be shot for their horns, which are prized by the Chinese for certain alleged restorative qualities. A small race is found in the domestic state, occasionally seen about the temples, but producing very little milk; and their slaughter being forbidden by the religion of the country, they are put to no useful purpose. The Sheep *(keh)* is neither a native of the country nor naturalized.

The Ox *(Bos Taurus)* is found wild in the Siamese forests, and exists very generally in the domestic state, particularly in the northern provinces. Those we saw about the capital were short-limbed, compactly made, and frequently without horns. They were generally of a red or a dark brown colour, and never of the white or grey, so prevalent amongst the cattle of Hindostan. They also want the hump over the shoulders, which characterises the latter. They are used only in agricultural labour, for their

milk is too trifling in quantity to be useful, and the slaughter of them, publicly at least, is forbidden even to strangers. When, during our stay, we wanted beef for our table, our servants were obliged to go three or four miles out of town, and to slaughter the animals at night. The wild cattle, for the protection of religion does not extend to them, are shot by professed huntsmen on account of their hides, horns, bones, and flesh, which last, after being converted into jerk beef, forms an article of commerce to China. Within the tract of the Menam, the Buffalo (*Bos Bubalus*) called by the Siamese both by the native term of Kwai, and the Malayan one Karbu, is more frequent than the ox, being by its superior strength and habits more suitable for agricultural labour in the deep and marshy soil which prevails in this situation. The Siamese Buffalo in all respects resembles the same animal as it exists among the Eastern Islands, and unless the Rhinoceros and Hippopotamus be excepted, is, after the Elephant, the largest of all quadrupeds.

Respecting tne birds of Siam, neither the state of my information respecting them, nor my general acquaintance with the subject, will enable me to furnish any thing better than mere gleanings. The birds of prey which we had an opportunity of seeing, were a White Eagle, of which various specimens were obtained and drawings made, and the Vulture (*Vultur*) the same species

found in Bengal, and here exhibiting on the tops of the Siamese temples, and close to the places where funerals are performed, its sluggish and disgusting form waiting for its prey. The Kite, (*Milvus*) is also very common. The two last, with the carrion Crow (*Corvus corone*), are found in vast numbers near the Siamese capital, and never being disturbed by the inhabitants, their impudence and familiarity is excessive. Not less frequent is the domestic Sparrow (*Fringilla domestica*), with more than its European familiarity. In proceeding towards the Equator, it appears here for the last time, not to my knowledge being found in any Asiatic country to the south of Siam, except in a few spots where it has been introduced by Europeans.

The Swallow which produces the esculent nest (*Hirundo esculenta*), is found within the Siamese territory, both on the east coast of the Bay of Bengal, and the west coast of that of Siam. It does not, however, exist, according to the information which we received, on the east coast of the latter, which appears a little singular.

The gallinaceous birds which we ascertained to exist in Siam, are the common peacock, (*Pavo cristatus*), the cock, (*Phasianus gallus*), a new species of fire-backed pheasant, (*Phasianus ignitus*), the quail, (*Tetrao coturnix*), with many species of pigeons. The peacock is numerous in the Siamese forests, where it is shot for its

feathers, which are exported to China. The dependent Malayan provinces produce a delicate and beautiful bird, resembling a diminutive peacock. This was heretofore called the double-spurred peacock; but has recently been erected into a new genus, and called *Polyplectron bicalcaratus*. The cock, (*ki*,) in its wild state, exists in the forests of Siam; and we found the common fowl at the capital not only very good, but cheap and abundant. I do not know whether Siam itself, or the provinces lying north and east of it, produce any pheasant except the fire pheasant already mentioned; but its Malayan tributaries produce the common fire pheasant,* the Argus pheasant, (*Phasianus Argus*), and in great abundance, two undescribed species, of which specimens were collected in our voyage, and are now deposited in the museum of the East India Company. Of the grey partridge, (*Tetrao cinereus*,) so frequent in Hindostan, no trace is to be found, at least in the lower parts of Siam; but in the adjacent Malayan countries there are several species. One of these is the

* This is a large, bold, and beautiful bird; and, being very hardy, might probably be naturalized in this country, without much difficulty. On our return from Siam, in 1822, we carried one along with us from Prince of Wales's Island, which was deposited in the menagerie at Barrackpore, where I saw it in high spirits, five years afterwards, seemingly unaffected by the cold, or other change of climate.

Roulul of Malacca, and the other the *Tetrao curvirostris.*

The most numerous order of birds in Siam appeared to us to be water birds with cloven feet, the grallæ, or waders, of Linnæus. This might be looked for, from the character of the country. Web-footed birds, in the southern latitudes of Siam at least, appeared to be comparatively unfrequent. These, however, being generally birds of passage, were probably not observed by us, only because we did not see the country in the winter, their season of visiting it. About the coasts of the islands were observed a considerable number of mews (*Larus*), and sea-swallows (*Sterna*). At Bangkok we saw the common pelican (*Pelicanus onocrotalus*); and at the islands at the head of the Gulf, the cormorant (*Pelicanus carbo*), and the booby (*Sula*). We could not learn, that in the lower parts of Siam, the goose (*Anas anser*), or the common duck (*Anas boschas*), were natives of the country, or found in the wild state. The domestic duck (*pet*) is reared by the Chinese, and is cheap and abundant. The goose, called *han* by the natives, no doubt a corruption of the Hindoo word *hans*, is scarcely known to the Siamese. The Muscovy duck, (*Anas moschata,*) now very generally found throughout the East, although a native of America, is bred in small numbers about Bangkok. Its name, Pet-Manila, or the duck of Manilla, indicates

the direction from whence it reached the country. The domestic fowl and common duck may, indeed, be described as the only poultry known to the Siamese, among whom want of wealth and comfort, not less than religious prejudice, prevents the rearing of such birds as are familiar in our poultry-yards in Europe; such as the goose, the turkey, the peacock, the pintado, &c. &c.

Feathers form a material branch of trade from Siam to China. Those most frequently exported, are those of the peacock, the king-fisher, the blue jay, the pelican, and of several birds of the crane and stork families.

The reptiles of Siam are, from all accounts, numerous, and would form an interesting and extensive subject of inquiry to the naturalist. Tortoises and crocodiles did not appear to us to be near so frequent in the Menam as in the Ganges. The green turtle (*Testudo Mydas*) is found abundantly near some of the islands on the east coast of the Gulf; and their eggs, which are in great request amongst the Siamese, as an article of food, constitute a considerable article of royal revenue. Lizards we found very numerous, and several beautiful species fell under our notice. One of the most singular and frequent of these is "the gecko," often described. This is "the gecko of Siam;" but frequent also in Java and many other islands of the Archipelago. It is more frequent in Siam than in any other

country; and, from its loud, harsh, and monotonous cry, proves a real annoyance through the night, for its habits are nocturnal. As soon as the rainy season had set in, snakes became very frequent, and we obtained many specimens, even in the court-yard of our dwelling. Among these we found no poisonous ones. The hooded snake, however, (*Coluber Naja,*) is known to exist. Of the boa constrictor, or rather the python, we met three specimens; none of which exceeded twelve or thirteen feet in length; although this animal, in Siâm, attains its usual enormous size of twenty and twenty-two feet.

We found the fish of the Menam, like that of other Indian rivers, in general, of very inferior quality. It is, however, sufficiently abundant; and one description, called, in commerce, *Cabus*, is, along with dried shrimps, a very considerable article of exportation to foreign countries. In regard to fish, the Siamese find it a matter of necessity or convenience to get rid of their horror of taking animal life; and therefore catch and use them as food, without reserve, with the exception however, already mentioned, of fishing within a certain distance of the royal residence.

Among insects, the only one which deserves mention for its utility is the *Coccus Lacca,* called in Siamese, *Krang*, which produces the valuable dye and gum called Lac in commerce, and which has of late years assumed so much importance

from the discovery in Bengal of a cheap process for obtaining a valuable colouring matter from it. The places which produce this commodity are the forests of Pi-sa-luk and So-ko-tai, with that of Changmai, and other parts of Lao, and of the mountains of the Isthmus, lying between the Bays of Bengal and Siam. The lac of Siam is of very superior quality, containing a larger portion of colouring matter than that either of Bengal or Pegu. I was informed, when in Siam, that in some parts of the country the lac insect is bred as the *Coccus Cacti*, which affords the cochineal, is in Mexico.

CHAPTER IV.

Geography.—Boundaries and Extent of the present Siamese Empire.—General aspect.—Rivers.—Explanation of Native names of places.—Description of the Coasts of Siam, and adjacent Countries and Islands.—Siam Proper.—Lao, Siamese Kamboja, and Malayan tributaries.—Account of the different races inhabiting or sojourning in the Kingdom of Siam.—Population.

THE present Siamese Empire is composed of the following parts, viz. Siam, or the proper country of the Siamese race; a large portion of Lao, a portion of Kamboja, and certain tributary Malay States. Its limits, in this wide acceptation, may be stated as follows: Its farthest southern boundary, on the western shore of the Malay Peninsula, is Kurao, in about the latitude of five degrees North. Its boundary, on the eastern shore, is Kamamang, in nearly about the same parallel. The northern boundary, in the present state of our information, is very little better than conjecture, but probably extends to about 21 degrees; so that the dominions of Siam have a range of no less than 16 degrees of latitude.

The extreme western limits of Siam, including some desert islands in the Bay of Bengal, are nearly in 97° 50′ East longitude. Its eastern

boundary probably extends to at least the 105th degree; so that it has a range of about seven degrees of longitude. Its area may be estimated at 190,000 geographical miles.

The greater proportion of the Siamese territory, although it contains a few rich alluvial plains, appears to be mountainous. One great primitive chain, in some situations not less than 5000 feet high, extends, from its southern limit, to at least the 18th degree North latitude; and indeed, in all probability, pervades its whole length. With the exception of about sixty miles at its head, the coast of the Gulf, as far as we observed it in our voyage, appeared every where to be extremely mountainous; and, according to the native accounts, the extensive territory of Lao is of the same character.

The Siamese territory abounds in small rivers. There are however but three great navigable streams,—the Menam, the river of Kamboja, and the river of Martaban. In relation to the Siamese, the first of these is by far the most important, because it pervades their whole territory, and they are in entire possession of its use and navigation nearly throughout. With the exception, however, of about eighty miles from its mouth to the old capital, Europeans have really less acquaintance with it than with the Niger. According to native accounts, it has its origin in the mountains of the Chinese province of Yunan,

where it is called the Nan-king-ho. Its whole course, therefore, does not probably exceed eight hundred miles. Down to Chang-mai in Lao, which is placed, in the map accompanying this work, in 20° 14′ North latitude, it is navigable only for small canoes. After receiving a number of tributary streams, it becomes, at the old capital, Ayuthia, a fine navigable river; and continues so until it disembogues itself by three channels, at the head of the Gulf, between 13° and 14° of North latitude. The eastern, or largest of these channels, the only one navigable by European ships, has already been described in the JOURNAL. The Western mouth of the Menam is known to the Siamese by the name of Meklong, from a town of the same name near the sea. The central mouth is called Tachin, also from the name of a town. These two, like the greater branch, are obstructed by a bar of sand and mud, over which, at the highest spring-tides, there are not, according to the season of the year, above from four to six cubits water: no vessels of large burthen, therefore, can navigate them. On the central branch, it may be observed, is manufactured the principal part of the fine bay-salt, which supplies the whole kingdom, and is so largely exported to foreign countries. On the same branch, and a little farther up, there is a considerable manufacture of sugar from the cane. From this statement, it will be seen that the

Menam is, among Asiatic rivers, of but second or third-rate magnitude.*

The river of Kamboja, as far as it is known, will be described in the geographical sketch of the Cochin Chinese Empire. That of Martaban forms merely a portion of the frontier which divides Siam from the Burman and British territories; and, as far as the Siamese are concerned, passing also by a mountainous and uncultivated country, is of small importance.

Before submitting to the reader the few notices collected respecting the interior of Siam, and which will be given under each subdivision, as already enumerated, I shall endeavour to give a sketch of the coasts and their immediate neighbourhood, respecting which details somewhat more satisfactory have been obtained. It will be necessary to premise a short explanation of a few native terms of frequent recurrence, in order to render the map and description intelligible.

The word Menam literally means "mother of waters," and seems the only one in the Siamese language for a river. It is in fact a generic and not a proper name; and although applied to the

* The Menan is said to become navigable at Chang-mai in the months of August and September. At this time, flat boats, with rafts of timber or bamboo, containing goods of various descriptions, and covered over with sheds, begin to drop down. They take two months to reach Bangkok; where the river, in the months of November and December, is crowded with them.

great river of Siam, (*par excellence*, the river,) it is equally applicable to any other. In the Siamese language, as in many other Asiastic ones, there seems to be no one proper name to distinguish a river throughout its course,—each separate portion of it taking its name from the principal place by which it passes, as the river of Bangkok, the river of Kampeng-pet, the river of Chang-mai, &c. which mean only different parts of the Menam.

Pak-nam means literally the "water's mouth," and is a term applied to the *embouchure* of any river whatever. Ko, in Siamese, is an "island," and is invariably prefixed to the proper name. Lem, a word of frequent occurrence, as prefixed to proper names, means cape, or headland. The word Krong is applied to the capital, or chief town of a kingdom. Muang means a city, and also the province attached to a city. The Siamese apply this term to their tributary states. Bang appears to mean a district, or inferior subdivision. Ban literally means a village, but is also applied to the quarters of towns or cities, these being, in fact, looked upon as aggregations of villages, which, in reality, is no improper description of them. Fu-kao is a mountain. These two last words, like Ko, an island, are always prefixed by the Siamese to a proper name. The distinctive adjuncts Yai and Noe, "great and little," with Keo and Lai, "old," and Mai,

"new," are frequent in the Siamese names of places.

The great variety of languages which prevail, especially towards the frontiers, are sources of much perplexity to a stranger in the geography of Siam, and other Hindoo-Chinese countries. On the Kambojan frontier, for example, there will be found a Siamese, a Kambojan, and an Anam, and, if the place should happen to be a seaport, a Chinese name. On the Malay frontier we have the same place called by a Siamese and a Malay name; and on the Burman frontier, by a Siamese, a Peguan, and a Burman one: of course, there is a similar inconvenience on the Chinese frontier. One example of this difficulty may be given. The trading port on the Gulf of Siam, which is called Hetian, in Anam, is in Kambojan called Peam; in Siamese, Muang-kaom; and in Chinese, Kang-kao. These various terms, it appears, are often mere translations of each other.

Beginning with the east coast of the Gulf of Siam, the southern limit of the Siamese territory is the island of Ko-kong, in the latitude of 10° 40′ North. This is inhabited by a mixture of Siamese, Chinese, Kambojans, and Cochin Chinese. The governor of the district to which it is attached, resides at a small town, also called Kong, a few hours' journey up a little river which falls into the sea opposite to the island.

Farther to the north are the large islands of Ko-Chang, Ko-Kud, Ko-Mak and Ko-Massi. Ko-Chang is inhabited by a mixture of different races, like Ko-Kong. On the opposite continent is the town and district of Tung-yai, a word which, in the Siamese language, means the "great plain." At this place the chain of mountains which commence at Kang-Kao, or Hattien, is interrupted, leaving a considerable extent of level land as far as Chantabun. A broad arm of the sea leads to the town of Tung-yai: into this there fall three small rivers, on the most northerly of which the town is situated, distant about eight hours' journey from the sea. Between Ko-Chang and the main there is a navigable channel for large ships, which, as well as the arm of the sea leading to Tung-yai, are safe harbours. Opposite to Ko-Chang is a small town, called Nam-Cheo, where there reside a considerable number of Malays.

Chantabun is the most considerable place on the east coast of the Gulf. The town was described to me by a Siamese, who had visited it, as being twelve hours' journey distant from the sea by water; the place being situated on a river of moderate size. Two Jesuits, who were driven thither by stress of weather in a Chinese junk, gave the following brief account of it towards the end of the seventeenth century. "The river is large, and its banks covered with trees,

but it has little depth. Numerous brooks issuing from the forest, and which come from the neighbouring hills, fall into it. As we were desirous of conferring with the Governor, and as our vessel experienced difficulty in getting up, we embarked in a small boat for the town. Chantabun is situated at the foot of one of those great mountains, which form a chain running north and south, dividing the kingdom of Siam from that of Kamboja. It is situated on a height, surrounded by woods. On the side by which we entered it, it appeared inclosed by a fence of old planks, fitter to defend the inhabitants from wild animals, than to secure them against an enemy. Having walked for a quarter of an hour, and always up to the knees in grass, we reached the Governor's house." The place is probably considerably improved since; for both here and at Tung-yai, and some of the intermediate places, there are many Chinese settlers, chiefly engaged in the cultivation of pepper. Of this commodity, Chantabun is said to produce from thirty to forty thousand piculs yearly; and Tung-yai, about ten thousand. Within the point called Lem-sing in the map, and at the mouth of the Chantabun river, there is said to be good shelter, and anchorage in five and six fathoms water.

The districts of Tung-yai and Chantabun are the proper country of the race called Chong,

whom I have mentioned in the JOURNAL, and of whose language a short vocabulary will be found in the APPENDIX. From Chantabun northward, to the alluvial tract formed by the *debouchement* of the river of Bang-pa-söe, both the mainland and the islands are hilly or mountainous. They are indeed, from all accounts, very thinly peopled, and nearly covered with primeval forests, which afford rose-wood, barks, dye-wood, and timber for ship-building; among which, however, teak is not included. The first remarkable place in this tract, proceeding northward from Chantabun, is the deep bay of Kong-kaben; which, however, is exposed to the south-west monsoon, and has a depth of no more than three fathoms. The country in its neighbourhood is a mere wilderness. The channel between the island of Ko-sa-met and the main is said to be an excellent harbour; but neither on the island, nor the continent fronting it, are there any inhabitants. At Rayung and Bang-po-mung there are a few inhabitants. Ko-kram, or Indigo Island, has also a few, most of whom, I was told, are Cochin Chinese. All the isles and islets situated in this quarter are much frequented by turtle; the eggs of which are sent fresh to Bangkok, and constitute, as mentioned in another place, an article of revenue to the Government.

Bang-pa-söe is said to be a very considerable town, containing several thousand inhabitants.

It has a wooden stockade, and is considered by the Siamese as a place of some importance, as a barrier against the Cochin Chinese. This, and the district attached to it, as may be seen by the map, are fronted by the mud-flat of the Menam, and other streams which fall into the head of the Gulf. The country is a low alluvial land of great fertility, productive in rice and sugar-cane. I was informed, that from Bang-pa-söe, all the way to Tung-yai, there was a tolerable carriage-road. The river of Bang-pa-kung, on which Bang-pa-söe is situated, is said to be not much inferior in size to the Menam itself, and to have the same depth of water on its bar. Within it there are from two and a half to three fathoms water. The chief resides at Patriyu, about a day and a half's journey up. Here there is a fort, and a considerable population. The country is cleared, and highly cultivated with rice; being not inferior in fertility to the banks of the Menam at Bangkok and Old Siam. This river has its origin in the mountains separating Siam from Kamboja, and by it the latter country has always been invaded by the Siamese.

From the Mek-long, or western branch of the Menam, to Yi-san, the coast is described as a mere forest, of no value but for the fire-wood which it affords to the capital. At the last-named place, the country is again well cultivated with rice, and tolerably peopled. The three rivers, call-

ed Bang-ta-bun-nöe, Bang-ta-bun-yai, and Bang-lem, are three branches of a river on which the town of Pri-pri is situated, ten hours' journey from the sea. This is said to be a place of considerable size, having a fortification of masonry. Its district is populous, well cultivated with rice, and abounds in the necessaries of life. One of the principal articles of its produce, and which is largely exported, is palm sugar. The river is shallow, and inaccessible to vessels of any considerable burthen.

At the point of Kwi* commences, on the eastern coast of the Peninsula, the mountainous country, which, extending to Cape Romania, embraces nearly eleven degrees of latitude, and, with very partial exceptions, the whole breadth of the Peninsula. The little towns of Kwi and Pran are situated in this neighbourhood. They are small places, and indeed the country in this vicinity is said to be throughout very poorly inhabited. Tin, which, with gold, is so widely disseminated through the mountainous country just mentioned, already presents itself at Pran.

* The name of this place, as it is written in our ordinary maps, affords a curious specimen of mistaken orthography. It seems to have been first written Cui, which is sufficiently correct. Some transcriber, however, having transferred the dot from the i to the first limb of the u, concluded that the word was Cin. This seems afterwards to have been improved upon, by changing the supposed soft C into an S, so that, in the end, the Point of Kwi was converted into the Point of Sin!

Bang-irom, Muang-lai, and Muang-mai, are all small towns, with thinly peopled districts. The forests in the neighbourhood abound in sapan wood. From the last-named place, a military road leads towards Mergui, on the opposite coast, constructed, about thirty-three years ago, by the late King of Siam, for the purpose of invading the Burman territory. It is said to be easily practicable for elephants, and, in some measure, even for wheel carriage. It runs over a country of no great elevation, for three days' journey. From Muang-mai to Champon, the country is poor and sterile. Here occur two small towns, called Bang-ta-phan and Pat-yu: at the first of which, gold is procured by washing; and at the last, there is a considerable fishery of shrimps, which are manufactured into the condiment called by the Malays Blachang, an article of exportation.

The next place is Cham-pon, which is the name of a town and district. The town, according to native report, is about four hours' sail up a river, commonly named Tayung. The country produces some tin, timber fit for ship-building, and excellent ratans.

Between Pumring and Bandon, the country becomes much more productive and better inhabited. This is said to be an alluvial tract of some extent, affording a considerable quantity of rice: small vessels, drawing not above twelve feet

water, may enter the river, which is the most considerable on the west shore of the bay; and behind two islands, off its mouth, there is a safe harbour in either monsoon. From the head of this river to the head of that of Ponga, opposite to Junk Ceylon, is said to be but two days' journey. It is in this direction that the produce of Junk Ceylon, and some European and Indian merchandize, are transported across the Peninsula, ultimately to find their way by sea to Bangkok. According to native statements, an extensive mud-flat, dry at low water, fronts the whole coast, from the point called Lem-sui to Bandon. On this bank great quantities of prawns, crabs, and other shell-fish, are caught by the natives.

Ligor is the name of a Siamese town and district, in the Malayan language, but in the dialect of the Siamese themselves, it is called Lakon. The river, called Ta-yang, is small and shallow, with not above a cubit's depth on its bar at low water. This leads to Ligor, which lies on a brook falling into the larger river. The town of Ligor has a brick fort, and is said to contain about five thousand inhabitants, consisting of Siamese, Malays, and Chinese; the first in greatest number. Two or three Chinese junks trade yearly with Ligor, their export cargoes consisting of cotton, and what is commonly called Malayan produce, viz. tin, black pepper, ratans, &c.

Talung is a town six hours' journey up a small

river, which falls into the channel between the main and the island, which is called in our maps Tantalem. The neighbouring country is said to be tolerably productive, and was once populous; but oppression has driven the inhabitants, of late years, to emigrate to Prince of Wales's Island, and the Malay countries. From Talung to Trang on the opposite coast, is said to be a journey of six days' travel by elephants.

Sungora, so called in Malay, but in Siamese Sungkla, is the most southerly Siamese district or province. The country is said to be poor and unproductive. The town is situated partly on the Continent, and partly on the opposite island of Tantalem; it is frequented yearly by two or three Chinese junks, which export tin, pepper, rice, and sapan wood. Taná is the last Siamese station, forming the boundary between the proper country of the Siamese and that of the Malays.

The islands on the western coast of the Gulf of Siam are far less numerous than those on the eastern, and the smaller ones are all uninhabited. Proceeding southward from the head of the Gulf, the first which is inhabited is Ko-phang-an, the Pulo Sancori of our charts: the inhabitants consist of a few poor Malays. Ko-samui is larger and more populous. The greater number of the inhabitants are Siamese; but there are also a few Chinese of the island of Hainan, whose junks, to the number of ten or fifteen, come yearly to

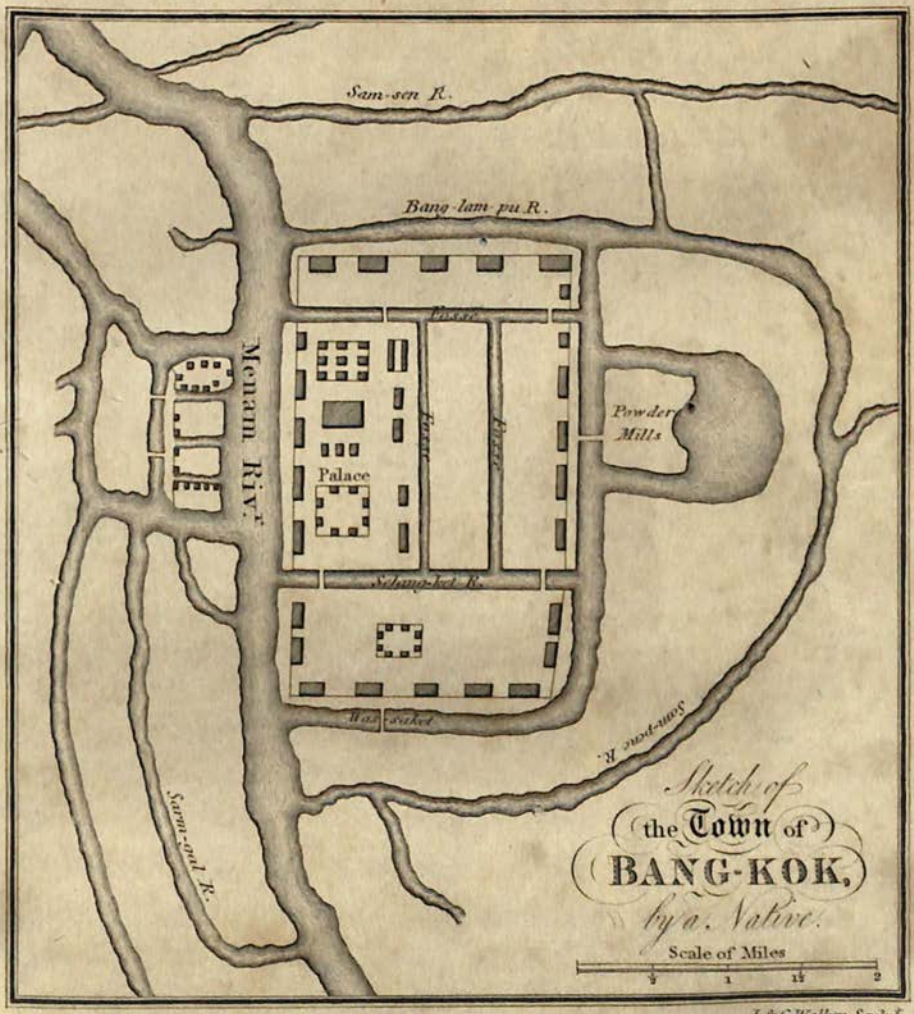
this place to obtain cotton, its principal produce, with some esculent swallows' nests.

The large island of Tantalem is separated from the main by a narrow channel, which has considerable depth of water at its south-western extremity; but towards the north it is bare at low-water, and even at high-water is not above two or three feet deep. It is greatly infested by mosquitos. The island itself is high land to the south, but low and marshy to the north. No part of it is cultivated or inhabited, except that which contains a portion of the town of Sungora. The name Tantalem is not known either to Siamese or Malays. Possibly the word is a corruption of Talung-lem, or the Cape of Talung.

On the shore of the Straits of Malacca and Bay of Bengal, the proper Siamese territory extends from Lungu to Pak-chan, a distance of not less than 260 miles; including a great many islands, some of them of very considerable size. In general, the country is a mere wilderness, with a few specks here and there inhabited. The best peopled portion of this territory is the island of Salang, called by us Junk Ceylon, a corruption of the Malayan word Ujung Salang, meaning the headland of Ceylon, which has already been described in the JOURNAL. The island is under a governor, who has the title of a Phya. Subject to his jurisdiction, are seven districts on the Continent, such as Ponga, Bangri, &c. extending all

the way to the Burmese frontier, or now the British, at Pakchan. The most considerable of the places in question is Ponga, which contains between three and four thousand inhabitants, among whom there are said to be from eight hundred to one thousand Chinese. Tin mines, or rather stream works, appear to be wrought in the district of Ponga, as well as Junk Ceylon.

The proper country of the Siamese race is the valley of the Menam, which, at its southern extremity, does not exceed sixty miles broad. Its length extends from the sea to Pe-chai, a distance of about three hundred and sixty miles. If the average breadth equals that of its southern extremity, its whole area will, of course, be twenty-one thousand six hundred square miles. To the west, the valley is bounded by the chain of mountains already mentioned. Another range of mountains bounds it to the east, dividing it from the great river of Kamboja; between which and the Menam there is probably no communication, although upon this subject the native statements given to me were not very consistent. The largest towns of the proper Siamese territory, are Bangkok, the modern capital, Ayuthiá, the ancient one, and Pi-sa-luk. Bangkok extends along the banks of the Menam, to the distance of about two miles and a half; but it is of no great breadth, probably not exceeding one mile and a half. The principal portion of the town is



J. & C. Walker Sculp.t

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on the left bank of the river, where the palace is situated. The accounts which we received of its population were very vague and little to be relied on. Some of them made it amount to as much as one hundred and fifty thousand. Judging by the extent of ground on which it stands, I should not be disposed to estimate the inhabitants at more than one-third of this number. The old capital is still the most populous place in the kingdom next to Bangkok, and was mentioned to me as being equally so with the latter: but judging from the amount of revenue which it pays, as given in another place, there can be no doubt that this is an exaggeration. Of Pi-sa-luk I know nothing more than that it was described to me as a considerable town, lying on the Menam, and surrounded by a wall of brick. The remaining principal towns are enumerated in another place, in the order of their supposed magnitudes.

The country of the Lao, a people speaking a dialect of the Siamese language, appears to be divided between the Siamese, the Chinese, and the Burmans. It is composed of petty states, tributary to those three powers. Four of these are under the dominion of Siam; namely, Chang-mai, Lan-chang, Pasak, and Luang-phra-bang. Their chiefs are hereditary princes. The first of these named places, has sometimes been written Zimai and Jang-mai, and is evidently the district which the authors of the Modern Universal His-

tory have converted into a kingdom, under the name of Jangoma. The town is situated upon the Menam, where it is so shallow as only to be navigable for small canoes. The distance from Bangkok to it was described to me as a month's journey, chiefly by water. Lan-chang, always considered the capital of Lao, is situated in about 15° 45′ North latitude, on the great river of Kamboja, which is here as broad and as large as the Menam at Bangkok. It was described to me as being as populous as this last place; of which I have great doubt, because it has comparatively little foreign trade, is not much resorted to by Chinese, and is not the seat of a court. Among its inhabitants are said to be about eight thousand Chinese of the neighbouring province of Yunan, commonly known to the Siamese by the names of Ho and Nung-seh. Besides the four towns, with their provinces, above stated, a fifth considerable place was mentioned to me by a native of the country, under the name of Siang-kwang, situated about fifteen days' journey to the north-east of Lang-chang. An alphabet, and other specimens of the language of the inhabitants of this portion of Lao, was shown to me at Bangkok. It appeared to be rude, and did not, as usual, follow the classification of the Nagri. The Siamese reckon, in all their portion of Lao, one hundred and one towns, large and small.

Of the kingdom of Kamboja, Siam possesses a

large province, named Batabang; the greater portion of that country being subject or tributary to Cochin China. The revolution by which the kingdom of Kamboja was dismembered, may be finally dated from the year 1809, when a civil war broke out in the country, one party calling in the Siamese to its assistance, and the other the Cochin Chinese. The latter made themselves masters of Penompeng, the modern capital, and the person of the King; who continues in the nominal government of a large portion of the country, but under the control of a Cochin Chinese Mandarin, with a Cochin Chinese garrison.

The Malayan States, which are tributary to Siam, are, Queda, on the western coast of the Peninsula, with Patani, Kalantan, and Tringano, on the east. Of late years, the Siamese also laid claim to Perak; but by a treaty with the British Government, they have recently given up this pretension. With the exception of Patani and Queda, of which they have nearly assumed the direct administration, the dominion of the Siamese over their Malayan tributaries is little better than nominal. Every three years the Malayan princes send to Siam, as a mark of their tributary condition, a flower or tree of gold and silver; and they are farther liable to contributions in men, money, and provisions, when the Siamese are at war; and have the power, which seldom happens, to exact them.

The different races inhabiting the Siamese territories may be enumerated as follows: Siamese, Lao, Kambojans, Malays, Kariang, Lawa, Ká, Chong, and Samangs, with the following strangers or foreign settlers, Chinese, Mohammedans and Hindoos of Western India, Portuguese, and Peguans. Of the number of these different classes, I shall endeavour to furnish such brief notices, however imperfect, as I was enabled to collect, either during my residence in the country, or afterwards from other persons who had visited it. The number of the proper Siamese borne on the rolls for public service, according to the statements given to me, was said to be about three hundred thousand. This would give a population, in round numbers, of one million two hundred and sixty thousand.

The native population of Lao was stated to me, on an estimation of the number of persons borne on the public rolls, to be equal to that of Siam itself. To avoid error on the side of exaggeration, however, I shall state it at one-third less, or eight hundred and forty thousand. Of the Mon, or Pegu, race, although the Siamese be in possession of no part of their territory, there are a considerable number in Siam, chiefly emigrants, from the province of Martaban, driven from thence by the oppression of the Burman Government; and they are subject to the conscription. The number of persons of this nation borne on

the public rolls of the Siamese Government, was stated to me at six thousand; which would give a population, in round numbers, of twenty-five thousand. The amount of Kambojans was stated at the same number. The Malayan state of Queda, previous to its occupation by the Siamese, in 1821, was said to contain about fifty thousand inhabitants, of whom about ten thousand have since emigrated into the British territory. The population of Tringano and Kalantan, on the opposite side of the Peninsula, has been reckoned together at about eighty-five thousand; giving thirty-five thousand for the first, and fifty thousand for the second, the Chinese settlers not being included in either case. The state of Patani is the largest and most populous of the Malayan Peninsula; but I have heard no estimate of its population. Allowing it, however, to be equally populous with the others, it ought, from its area, to contain not less than sixty thousand inhabitants. Besides the Malays residing in their own countries, there are said to be at Bangkok not less than ten thousand, chiefly captives, carried off from Queda and Patani, but especially from the latter. The Kariang, the Lawá, the Ká, and the Chong, are wild and migratory races. The first and second of these are the same people who inhabit various portions of the Burman dominions. They are confined to the mountainous parts of Lao. The Ká, a term which in the

Siamese language means slave, but who are called by the Kambojans, Panong, inhabit the mountains of Lao, bordering upon Kamboja. The Chong, a more industrious and settled people than the rest of this class, inhabit, as already mentioned, the hilly country on the eastern side of the Gulf of Siam, between the eleventh and twelfth degrees of North latitude. The Samang, as is sufficiently well known, are a diminutive race of savage negroes, dwelling in the mountainous regions of the Malayan Peninsula. I may here mention, that a youth of this race was sent to me in 1824, while at Singapore, by the Raja of Kalantan. He was placed under the charge of Mr. Thomsen, a diligent, zealous, and judicious missionary; and, in point of capacity for education, was found in no respect inferior to the other children under his tuition. Of the number of these different races I received no account whatever, but from their habits it may safely be concluded that it is very small.

The Chinese settlers in the Siamese territory, are chiefly emigrants from the provinces of Canton and Fokien; but there is also a considerable number from the island of Hainan, and some from Chekiang and Kiangnan. The few emigrants from Yunan are confined to the northern parts of Lao, and of course we had no opportunity of seeing any of them while in Siam. The Chinese resort to Siam, as to other foreign coun-

tries, unaccompanied by their families. They soon intermarry with the Siamese, there being no scruple on either side. They even adopt, whatever may have been their religion before, or whether they had any or not, the Buddhist form of worship, visiting the Siamese temples, and giving the usual alms to the priests. A few of them even enter the priesthood, although this mode of life is by no means very congenial to their industrious and active character. What is probably a little more remarkable, they forego their partiality for costly sepulchral monuments, burning their dead like the Siamese.* They invariably dress, however, in the costume of their own country. Every male amongst them, above the age of twenty, pays a capitation tax. The number assessed to this tax at Bangkok and its vicinity, was stated to me at thirty-one thousand. Indeed it is commonly computed that one half of the population of the capital is composed of Chinese; a statement which, from what we observed ourselves, I do not consider exaggerated. The whole number assessed to the capitation tax within the Siamese

* Returning home one day from an excursion on the Menam, my attention was attracted by observing a Chinese, all alone, stirring up some embers, within the enclosures of a temple, with an instrument resembling a pitchfork. On landing, we found that he was completing the funeral rites of some relative. He was stirring the fire to complete the destruction of some of the larger bones, and was either cheering or consoling himself at his labour with a song!

territory, Malayan States excluded, was given to us at one hundred thousand. Were the Chinese population of Siam, which they are not, constituted as under ordinary circumstances, this would make their whole number amount to about four hundred and twenty thousand. It was stated to me, indeed, at a much greater rate, even as high as seven hundred and fifty thousand. The Chinese settlers, within the tributary Malay States, engaged in traffic, or in working gold and tin, have been estimated at twenty thousand.

This statement shows an extraordinary increase since the close of the seventeenth century, for I find that the French writers no where estimate their numbers at more than four or five thousand. There are at Bangkok also a good many Cochin Chinese, but of their number I can render no account. A Siamese chief pointed out their existence to me as a proof of the superiority of the Siamese over the Cochin Chinese Government, explaining, as was true enough, that there were no Siamese, under similar circumstances, in any part of Cochin China.

There are in Siam a considerable number of settlers from the southern Peninsula of India. A very few of these are Hindoos, but by far the greater part Mohammedans, of whom the most influential, although not the most numerous, are Shias, or sectaries of Ali. The professors of the

Mohammedan worship in Siam are compelled, from their situation, to make a thousand sacrifices and compliances, very incompatible with their tenets. Such of them as accompanied us to the temples bowed very respectfully to the images of Buddha; and I was told, that when they had any point to carry, it was not unusual to see them giving alms to the priests, and making offerings at the temples. They even go farther than this, occasionally giving their daughters in marriage to the infidels. The grandfather of the present King, for example, took into his haram the daughter of the principal Mohammedan at Bangkok, but soon dismissed her in consequence of the lady's declining to serve alms to the priests. The number of their own mosques at Bangkok is nine; all very poor buildings indeed. According to the information given to me, the number of Mohammedan families at Bangkok was three hundred, and at the old capital four hundred; which, at five persons to each family, would make their number three thousand five hundred.

The Christians residing in Siam are all either the descendants of Portuguese, or persons assuming the Portuguese name. From a large mixture of Indian blood, or being merely the descendants of native converts, these persons are fully as dark as the Siamese themselves, and much more so, than the resident Chinese. The greater number

of them are engaged in the commercial department, chiefly as interpreters. They are all indigent, but very inoffensive. The whole number at Bangkok was estimated to me at eight hundred. At the old capital there are about seven hundred, and in the Siamese portion of Kamboja, probably about five hundred, making the total about two thousand.

According to these very imperfect data, the population of the Siamese Empire throughout will be as follows:—

Siamese	1,260,000
Laos	840,000
Peguans	25,000
Kambojans	25,000
Malays	195,000
Chinese	440,000
Natives of Western India	3,500
Portuguese	2,000
Total	2,790,500

The area of the country being estimated at 190,000 square miles, it follows, that the population is only at the rate of between fourteen and fifteen inhabitants to the square mile,—a miserable proportion for a kingdom of such extent, and affording conclusive evidence of barbarism and bad government. The data on which this esti-

mate of the population of Siam has been formed are undoubtedly extremely unsatisfactory. I feel satisfied, however, that, small as it is, it is not underrated. One of the French writers, indeed, estimates it in the last century at only 1,200,000. But I suspect that he excluded from his calculation the dependencies of the kingdom, which at the time were not considerable, while the Chinese settlers were very few indeed, in comparison to their present amount.

Whatever may be the actual population of Siam, there can be no doubt whatever but that, for so extensive a country, it is extremely scanty and insignificant, when compared even with any tolerably civilized and well-governed country of Asia. This is a conclusion, indeed, at which any one who inquires into the subject must soon arrive. A Mohammedan prince of India, the King of Golconda, as he is called by the French writers, sent an ambassador to Siam, in the seventeenth century, and in his route from Mergui this officer necessarily crossed the immense wilderness which lies between that place and Ayûthia. One of the Siamese Ministers afterwards rallied him on the small extent of his master's dominions, in comparison to those of the Great King. The Indian ambassador replied, that it was true his master's dominions were small, but they were inhabited by human beings; whereas the territories of

his Siamese Majesty were for the most part peopled by monkeys!

The checks to population, in which the land is often fertile, and always abundant, the communication generally easy, and the climate favourable, may be described at once to be comprised in barbarism and bad government. The conscription, already described, is the most palpable shape in which these operate. This tax on industry keeps up the wages of labour, without increasing the number of labourers. The rate of common day labour at Bangkok, which is very scarce, is equal to about elevenpence, and that of a common house carpenter is full one shilling and threepence. These are extraordinary rates in a country where a hundred weight of rice may always be had for two shillings, and very often for half the amount. Other necessaries of life, such as salt, palm-sugar, spiceries, vegetables, fish, and even flesh, are proportionably cheap. The price of good pork, for example, is twopence halfpenny per pound. A duck may be had for sevenpence, and a fowl for threepence.

The ordinary age for contracting marriages in Siam, with the lower orders, is rarely under twenty-one for the men, or eighteen for the female sex, which, for an Asiatic country, is remarkably late. Persons of rank form much earlier connexions, for the matter is one in which the parties are entirely guided by their capacity,

or otherwise, to maintain a family. The condition of the lower orders of society is notwithstanding, I am led to believe, more easy and comfortable, as far as the mere necessaries of life are concerned, than might, on a first and superficial view, be expected from the character of the Government. In short, the excesses of the latter keep down the number of labourers, and so far improves the condition of this class of the people.

In a country where the price of labour is high, and the necessaries of life easily procurable, beggary from want, at least, is not very frequent. The mendicants whom we saw were either very old females, or persons of the other sex labouring under incurable disorders, such as leprosy, elephantiasis, &c. and occasionally persons who had suffered mutilation by the sentence of the law. With the exception of the first, all these are supposed, by the religion of the country, to be labouring under some malediction. They have consequently but a small share of the sympathy of their friends and relations, and are thus thrown upon the public charity. We met such mendicants only at the temples and monasteries, where they are accustomed to repair to receive the occasional charity of the pious, or the relics of the Talapoins' food, which is often greater than the latter can themselves consume. Among the Chinese at Bangkok, notwithstanding their numbers, we saw very few beggars, and these few were con-

fined to persons disabled from labour by some bodily infirmity. In reality, the condition of the settlers of this nation in Siam appears to be very comfortable. They are, upon the whole, lightly taxed; their taxes are fixed and certain, they are exempted from military service, and the subjection of the native inhabitants to the conscription gives them a kind of monopoly of the free labour of the country. In fact, the Chinese are rapidly increasing in numbers, and probably are the only portion of the population that is doing so. This circumstance, abundance of good unoccupied land, great commercial capabilities in the country, and a moderate distance from their own, so overstocked with labourers, readily account for the great number of emigrants that yearly settle in the country.

One class of mendicants, the priesthood, are sufficiently numerous in Siam, and their existence is no small burthen upon the people, although the tax of maintaining them be voluntary. The whole number of Talapoins at the capital was estimated to me at five thousand, and the whole number in the kingdom at fifty thousand, which would be little less than one fortieth part of the whole Buddhist population. If this statement approaches at all to the truth, it is certain that the abstraction of so large a portion of the inhabitants from active labour, as well as the burthen which it imposes on the remainder, must

prove a serious check to the progress of population.

I have described the climate of Siam, in general, as salubrious, and at all events it seems no where to be of such a character as to impede the natural progress of population. The only material checks from disease are the small-pox and cholera morbus. The first of these, which is much dreaded by the Siamese, and appears to be injudiciously treated both by them and by the Chinese, often visits the country and proves very fatal. The last is a recent scourge, which made its appearance in Siam, for the first time, in the month of April 1820, after having ravaged Hindostan for the three preceding years. The Phraklang informed me, that the epidemic was traced from Sungora along the coast all the way to the mouth of the Menam, from which last place it travelled to Bangkok in five days. The intensity of its ravages continued here for about fifteen days only, during which short time, according to the Phraklang's statement, it carried off two persons in ten, or a fifth part of the whole population. He and other persons spoke with horror of the devastation which it committed. The deaths, they stated, were so frequent and sudden, that there was no time for the usual funeral rites, and the bodies were thrown in hundreds into the Menam; so that, according to their account, they presented the appearance of rafts of timber float-

ing along the stream. The epidemic eventually spread to Lao on one side, and to Kamboja and Cochin China on the other, where it proved no less fatal. Of this malady, it may safely be asserted, that it is by far the most destructive which has ever afflicted the human race. It extended from Arabia to China, over ninety degrees of longitude, and from Java to the Himalaya Mountains, embracing forty degrees of latitude; in short, almost all the civilized and populous nations of tropical Asia were included in its ravages; and there can be little doubt that, from first to last, it swept off several millions. An intelligent Chinese, with whom I conversed on the subject, insisted nearly in as many words, that as the wars in which the principal nations of the world had been engaged, had recently, for the most part, ceased, this pestilence was a necessary arrangement of nature for keeping population down to the level of subsistence. No other Asiatic than a Chinese would have thought of expressing himself in such language.

CHAPTER V.

Geography of Cochin China.—Limits.—Rivers and Coasts.—Civil divisions.—Kamboja.—Champa, or Loi.—Foreigners resident in Cochin China.—Climate.—Mineral and Vegetable Products.—Animals.

THE present Empire of Cochin China consists of a portion of the ancient kingdom of Kamboja, of Cochin China itself, and of Tonquin; which two last are known to the natives, and to the Chinese, by the common name of An-nam. The countries which border upon it are Siam, Kamboja and Lao to the west and north-west; and to the north, the Chinese provinces of Quang-tong, Quang-si, and Yu-nan. The sea surrounds it in all other directions. The southern limit of the Cochin Chinese Empire is Pulo Ubi, in latitude 8° 25′ North, and its northern, as far as it can be ascertained, extends to about the 23° of North latitude. The point which on the coast divides it from Siam, is the island of Ko-kong, in about North latitude 10° 40′, and East longitude 103° 13′. The last village in Tonquin, before entering the province of Canton, is Quang-

sai, which, as far as can be determined, appears to be nearly in the twenty-second degree of North latitude. In our translations of Chinese writers, it is stated that the boundary between Tonquin and the Chinese province of Quang-si, is marked by two pillars of brass erected many centuries ago by the Chinese; but my inquiries do not corroborate this statement. The extreme length of the whole kingdom may be estimated at above nine hundred geographical miles. The breadth is very unequal, varying from sixty to one hundred and eighty miles. Its area, in round numbers, may be taken at 98,000 square miles.

The two extremities of the kingdom, Kamboja and Tonquin, consist, for the greater part, of low alluvial tracts, little elevated above the level of the sea; while the central part, or Cochin China Proper, is generally mountainous, with here and there valleys of considerable extent and fertility.

The Cochin Chinese Empire is at present divided into three great civil divisions, which correspond pretty exactly with the geographical and physical ones. These consist of Kamboja and Tonquin, which are administered by viceroys: and Cochin China, which is administered directly by the Court itself. The kingdom is divided into provinces, amounting in all to twenty-two. The following is such a sketch of these as I have been enabled to collect. The government of Kamboja, of which Saigun is the capital, is di-

vided into six provinces, of which the following are the names in the Annam language: Ya-teng, Peng-fong, Fo-nan, Win-cheng, Ho-sin, and Teng-chong. The ancient Kambojan names, however, such as Dong-nai, Que-douc, Sa-dek, Mi-tho, Ca-mao, and Tek-sia, are still, I believe, more current among the inhabitants. The government of Kamboja extends from the Island of Ko-kong to Cape St. James, and consists of an extensive alluvial tract, scarcely rising above the level of the sea, and bounded on both sides, towards the sea at least, by ranges of mountains. The most considerable rivers within it, beginning from the Siamese frontier, are those of Pong-som, Kampot, Kang-kao or Hatien; of Tek-sia, of Tek-mao, the great river of Kamboja, and that of Saigun.

The river of Kang-kao falls into the Gulf of Siam, in North latitude 10° 14′ and East longitude 104° 55′. At its *embouchure* it is of very considerable width, but shallow; the highest water at flood-tide not exceeding seven cubits, while at low tide the depth is not above three feet. In the season of the rains, there was a navigable communication between this river and the great one of Kamboja; and this natural channel has, within the last few years, been converted into a navigable canal of twenty fathoms broad, and fifteen feet deep. This extensive undertaking was going on during our visit to Cochin

China, and it was said that fifty thousand labourers had been employed upon it for two months, during a succession of years. The distance is a voyage of three days and three nights; the principal place on this river is Kang-kao, or Hatien, often written Athien; a town situated on the right bank of the river, about two miles up, and containing five thousand inhabitants, consisting of Kambojans and Cochin Chinese, with a few Chinese and Malays. Towards the beginning of the last century, there existed upon this river a town of considerable trade, called by Europeans, Ponteamas, where a considerable foreign trade existed for the supply of the old capital of Kamboja, between fifty and sixty leagues distant, and situated on the great river. This place, properly written, Po-tai-mat, is about a day's journey up the river, and has never been of any consequence, since destroyed in 1717 by the Siamese, in an attempt made by them, at that period, to conquer Kamboja.

The river of Pong-som, of no great size, discharges itself into the Gulf of Siam, as far as I can ascertain, about the latitude of 10° 43′. Near the mouth of it is a town, containing, it is said, one thousand Chinese inhabitants. The neighbouring country is fertile in black pepper, gamboge, cardamums, and varnish.

The river of Kam-pot, the same which is written in our charts "Can-vot," is still smaller than

that of Pong-som, and discharges itself into the Gulf of Siam in North latitude 10° 43′. There is here also a town near the mouth of the river, chiefly inhabited by Kambojans, but containing also a few Cochin Chinese, and about a thousand Malays. The surrounding country produces abundance of rice. Kam-pot is said to be distant from Pe-nom-peng, or Calompe, the present capital of Kamboja, twelve days' journey; and there is a road all the way, practicable for carts drawn by buffaloes, through a populous and well cultivated country.

The river of Tek-sia disembogues itself into the Gulf of Siam, about the latitude of 9° 46′ North. This is the name given to it by the Chinese traders; but in the Kambojan language it is called Kar-mun-sa, and in the Cochin Chinese Ret-ja. It is of considerable size, and navigable all the way to the great Kamboja river for small vessels. The country around it produces great abundance of bees-wax; but it is little cultivated, being scarcely habitable, on account of the number of musquitoes and leeches with which it is infested.

The river of Tek-mao, meaning in Kambojan the Black Water, also falls into the Gulf of Siam, opposite to Pulo Ubi. It communicates with the great river of Kamboja, and is navigable through its whole course for small boats. On this river, and about two days' sail up, is situated a town

of the same name, containing two thousand inhabitants, all Cochin Chinese. The river abounds in fish, and the surrounding country is fruitful in rice, but much infested by musquitoes.

The river of Kamboja is one of the largest in Asia. It is said to have its origin in a lake within the Chinese province of Yu-nan, and to be navigable for boats even before it enters the kingdom of Lao, between the twenty-second and twenty-third degrees of North latitude. It falls into the sea by three mouths, between the ninth and eleventh degrees. These three *embouchures* are known to European navigators by the names of the Western or Basak River, the Eastern or Central Branch, and the Northern or Japanese River. The first of these is the largest, and the most suitable for navigation, and is said to have from fourteen to eighteen feet water on the bar at its mouth at high-water spring-tides.

From Kang-kao to Cape St. James, the coast throughout is remarkably low—so much so, as to be liable to frequent inundation; and no mountains are visible in the interior. Cape St. James, the first bold land which is met in proceeding to the north, marks the entrance of the river of Saigun; perhaps, in all respects, for European navigation, the finest river in Asia, as it may be navigated for vessels of any burthen, and without a pilot, for sixty miles up. It is connected, at least by two branches, with the Japanese *embouchure*

of the great river of Kamboja. The source of this river is unknown to Europeans, but I was told by some of the natives of the country, that it was navigable for native crafts for twenty days' voyage above the city of Saigun, which is itself fifteen leagues from the sea. It has probably, therefore, a course of between three and four hundred miles; and, no doubt, originates in the mountains of Lao.

The Government of Cochin China Proper* is divided into seven provinces. Commencing from the south, the first of these is Bin-thuon, lying next to the Government of Saigun, or Kamboja. It is described as a small and mountainous country, chiefly remarkable for the quantity of the precious wood of aloes which it produces. The next to it is the province of Nha-trang, an elevated and ill-cultivated district. This province contains the two magnificent harbours of Nha-trang and Camraigne; from the former of which, the principal town of the same name is distant but a few leagues, and connected by a river. Nha-trang was strongly fortified in the European manner by the late King, the work being conducted by M. Olivier, a French engineer, in his

* The name is said to have been imposed by the Portuguese, in contradistinction to the principality of Cochin on the Malabar coast. The inhabitants call it Dang-traoing, or the Central Country, in opposition to Tonquin, which they designate the External Country.—*Nouvelles Lettres Édifiantes*, 1821. *Paris*.

service. It is the seat of one of the royal arsenals, and, being very conveniently placed, is the centre of all the commercial transactions of this part of the empire. Silk is produced and manufactured in the province.

The province of Phu-yen is described as one of the richest in Cochin China; and the port of the same name, which contains three distinct harbours, the very finest. The country is thickly peopled and highly cultivated throughout, the "terrace cultivation" of rice being pushed almost to the summits of the hills. The principal products are rice, maize, and a great quantity of leguminous plants.

The province of Qui-nhon is described as of considerable extent. Its principal town, of the same name, distant about five leagues from the port, and connected with it by a navigable river, is still one of the largest places in Cochin China, and, before the civil war, conducted a considerable foreign trade. It was for some time the seat of Government with the Tys-sons, or insurgent chiefs of the late revolution, and is now strongly fortified, after the European manner. Qui-nhon was stated to me, by a French gentleman, who passed through it, to be populous, and highly cultivated.

The next province is Quang-ai, a mountainous district, which produces a considerable quantity of sugar. It is much exposed to the incursions

of a race of mountaineers, living on the hills lying to the west of it.

The province of Quang-nan is a very extensive one, producing rice, sugar, and cinnamon. It is this which contains the celebrated port of Turan, or Han.

The last province of this Government is that of Hué, which produces some sugar, and a considerable quantity of rice, but is not remarkable for its fertility. Much of it that we saw consisted of sterile mountains and marshes, and even in the plains which were under cultivation the soil seemed thin and sandy. The capital of the same name, but called also by the natives, Phu-chuan, and by the Chinese, Sun-wha, lies in this province, and is distant about six miles from the sea. It may be described as a long straggling town, of very little breadth, and extending, the fortress included, full four miles along the left bank of the river. In some places there are to be seen a few good houses of brick, roofed with tile; but the greater number of the habitations are poor structures of thatch and bamboo. According to the best information I could obtain, the population, including the troops, has been estimated at between fifty and sixty thousand.

The Government or Viceroyalty of Tonquin forms the most populous and valuable portion of the kingdom; but not having seen any part of the country myself, and even the French officers

in the King's service having seldom visited it, I have very little to add concerning it beyond what is already before the public.

Besides the name of Annam, which it has in common with Cochin China, this country is called by the natives by the same name which Europeans apply to it, or at least one much resembling it,—Dong-kinh,* and is recognised by the Chinese and Siamese under the name of Tang-kia. It is an extensive champaign country, principally watered by one great river and its numerous branches. Its southern boundary is at the small village and river of Ke-ga, about eighty-five leagues journey by land from the capital, Hué, and lying, as I conjecture, between the nineteenth and twentieth degrees of North latitude.

The river of Tonquin, which has been called by some European writers the Song-koy,† has probably not a very extensive course. Its source is said to be in the mountains of Yu-nan, and it falls into the Gulf of Tonquin by two mouths, the most southerly of which is in 20° 6′, and the most northerly in 20° 15′ North latitude. The

* The name is said to be derived from two Chinese words, Tong and King, which mean, the "Eastern Royal City." To distinguish it from Cochin China, the natives call it Dang-ngoai, or the External Country.—*Nouvelles Lettres Édifiantes. Paris*, 1821.

† This word appears to be a corruption of the native term Song-ca, meaning the Great River.—*Nouvelles Lettres Édifiantes. Paris*, 1821.

southerly channel is often used by the Chinese traders; but the northern was that navigated by Europeans when the Dutch and English traded with Tonquin. At that period there is described to have been not less than eighteen feet water at high spring-tides on its bar, rendering it navigable for vessels of very considerable burthen. I was assured, when in Cochin China, that this channel has of late years been in a great measure filled up by sands, and that it is not at present navigable for vessels above two hundred tons burthen. This was confidently affirmed both by the European gentlemen at the Court of Hué and by Chinese traders; but still I think there may be some error in the statement, and that the description may apply to the southern branch, which was at all times navigable for small vessels only.*

The river of Tonquin is a mile wide at its mouth, and heretofore was navigable for large ships at least twenty miles up, where the European shipping used to lie. At Hean, where the Chinese junks were wont to be moored, and which is eighty miles from the sea, Dampier describes the river as being broader than the Thames at Gravesend; and the same writer gives its breadth at the capital, twenty miles farther up, as being equal to that of the same river at

* The fact, certainly a very remarkable one, is expressly stated in the *Nouvelles Lettres Édifiantes;* and therefore, I presume, there can be no doubt of it.

Lambeth, but so shallow as to be fordable on horseback in the dry season.

On this river, and at the distance of one hundred miles from its mouth, is situated the capital of Tonquin, the largest city in the empire, most frequently called Ke-cho, written Cachao by us, but often, by the natives of the country, named Bak-than. Chinese traders, who were well acquainted with both, described it to me as being at least thrice as large as Hué, and it is probable that its population does not fall short of one hundred and fifty thousand. Dampier, in his time, believed it to contain twenty thousand houses, which would give a population of at least two hundred thousand. The only other considerable place of which I have heard is Hean, which, in the time of Dampier, was estimated to contain two thousand houses, and probably, therefore, not less than twenty thousand inhabitants.

Of the civil subdivisions of Tonquin, various accounts have been rendered. Dampier divides the country into eight provinces; the Abbé Richard into eleven; a manuscript sketch, by M. Chaigneau, into nine; and according to a native's statement furnished to me, they amount to fifteen. Their names, according to this last, are as follow:—Ke-cho, Teng-long, Wai-tak, Sang-sai, King-pak, Sing-kwang, Heng-wha, Ko-peng, Leong-san, Ching-wha, La-nam First and Lanam

Second, Hai-yong, An-kwong, and Man-ning-chao. Two of these provinces, lying adjacent to Cochin China, are under the immediate management of the Court; and the rest, as already mentioned, governed by a viceroy, who resides at Ca-chao.*

On the coast of Cochin China there are many islands, of which the following is such a sketch as I have been enabled to collect, beginning from the Gulf of Siam. The Cochin Chinese race have spread themselves in this quarter as far north as the considerable island of Ko-kram, nearly in the thirteenth degree of latitude, and, in fine weather, visible from the roads of Siam. This, and other islands in its neighbourhood, however, belong to Siam, down to Ko-kong inclusive. The extensive chain of islands from this to Pulo Ubi, all belong to Cochin China, including Pulo Panjang, and Pulo We, although distant from the coast. The greater number of them are small, steep, barren, thickly wooded and uninhabited. Of Pulo Ubi, and Quadrole, which are among the most considerable in size, some account has been given in the JOURNAL.

In the China Seas, the only considerable islands

* According to the *Nouvelles Lettres Édifiantes*, the number of Provinces is eleven; but the names there given differ almost entirely from those in the text. There is no doubt but that both civil divisions, and their names, are often capriciously altered.

belonging to Cochin China, are Pulo Con-dore, Pulo Can-ton, correctly Col-lao Ray, and Cham-col-lao, properly Col-lao Cham. All that I know of these has been already given in the JOURNAL. Besides these, the King of Cochin China, in 1816, took possession of the uninhabited and dangerous archipelago of rocks, islets, and sand-banks, called the Paracels, which he claims as part of his dominions, and over which his authority is not likely to be disputed.

Besides the Annam nation, the inhabitants of the present dominions of Cochin China consist of several other races, of which a short account is now to be given. The principal of these are the Kambojans, whose name, in their own language, is Kammer; but who are called by the Siamese, Kammen; by the Cochin Chinese, Komen; by the Chinese, Tang-po-cha, and by the Malays, Kamboja; which last is, no doubt, the word which has been borrowed by Europeans, and most frequently written Cambodia. The ancient territory of the Kambojans appears, as far as I can discover, to have embraced all the country lying west and south of the river of Saigun; extending on the Gulf of Siam as far north as the twelfth degree of latitude; and in the interior, at least to the fifteenth. The Kambojans speak a language distinct from those of all their neighbours; but in physical form, manners, laws, religion, and state of civilization, they bear a closer

resemblance to the Siamese than to any other people.

Of the history of Kamboja very little is known to Europeans. It appears, however, that in early periods, possessed as it is of a fertile soil and fine rivers, it was not inferior in strength and civilization to the neighbouring kingdoms of Siam, Lao, and Cochin China. As early as the year 616, it is described as having begun, like its neighbours, to send ambassadors and offerings to China; a practice which was continued to a very late period. It appears to have been engaged in perpetual contests with Siam and Cochin China, sometimes holding these countries in subjection, but being more frequently itself a tributary. In the tenth century, Kamboja is said to have been, for these parts of the world, a powerful kingdom. About the end of the twelfth century, it subdued Cochin China. In 1268, Kublai-khan, the Tartar Sovereign of China, being told that Kamboja was a country of great wealth, attempted its conquest; but his army was compelled to retire, receiving, however, an acknowledgment of submission from the invaded country, and a promise of paying to China a nominal tribute as heretofore. In the year 1717, the Siamese invaded Kamboja, when the King of this country called in the assistance of the Cochin Chinese, by whose aid the Siamese were defeated; and in consideration of the assistance given, Kamboja acknow-

ledged itself a vassal of Cochin China. Kamboja from this period appears to have continued in a state of much anarchy; and about the year 1750, the Cochin Chinese seized upon Dong-nai, and other provinces lying upon the river of Saigun. In 1786, Ong-tong, King of Kamboja, dying, an officer of his Court, who had married his daughter, was created Regent during the minority of his son, a child of a few years of age. The Regent placed the kingdom under the protection of Siam, and brought the infant son and daughter of the late King to the Court of Bangkok. Kamboja in this manner became virtually dependent upon Siam, a state of things which continued down to the year 1809, when a nephew of the late King, having succeeded in forming a party, seized a portion of the kingdom. The Regent, upon this, called in the assistance of the Siamese, and the nephew, that of the Cochin Chinese. Tai-kun, the Viceroy of Kamboja, and the individual with whom our Mission had an interview, by his activity and energy, and the superiority of his troops, soon decided the contest in favour of Cochin China. He entered Kamboja with a force of 30,000 men, and met the Siamese army on its way to occupy the capital. The latter was in no condition to contest the prizes with him; a conference took place, and a peace was concluded, by which all Kamboja was to continue tribu-

tary to Cochin China, with the exception of the province of Batabang, bordering on Siam, which was ceded to that country. This arrangement continues still in force, and under it the Kambŏjans, I am told, are treated with great rigour. The King has but a nominal authority; the Cochin Chinese troops and civil authorities occupy his country, and civil and military Cochin Chinese Mandarins reside at his capital, who virtually govern the kingdom, under the direction of the Viceroy of Saigun. Of this state of thraldom the Kambojans are reported to be extremely impatient, but considering the military organization of the Cochin Chinese government, and* their own unwarlike disposition, it does not seem probable that they will soon be able to emancipate themselves from it.*

Kamboja, as already mentioned, is a great, and, from all accounts, a fertile champaign country, separated from Siam, Lao, and Champa by ranges of mountains. The only two places of importance which it contains are Pe-nom-peng, called also Ca-lom-pé, the present capital, and Pon-tai-pret the ancient one, the place formerly known to Europeans under the name of the city of Kamboja.

* While Resident of Singapore, I carried on a friendly correspondence with this Chief and his Minister; in conducting it, much circumspection was necessary, to avoid giving offence to the Cochin Chinese.

Pon-tai-pret lies in about the twelfth degree of latitude, on the right bank of a branch of the great river, and eighty leagues distant from the sea. It is at present a place of little consequence. Pe-nom-peng, the modern capital, is about forty miles lower down, where the main river and the branch last-mentioned meet, and situated on the right bank. This place was described to me by natives of it, whom I met in Siam, as a town of considerable size, and containing a population of from 25 to 30,000 inhabitants. Situated to the north-east of Pe-nom-peng are two extensive lakes of fresh water, which in the dry season do not contain above from one to two cubits of water, but in the season of inundation full three fathoms. The name given to the largest of them, in the Kambojan language, is Tan-le-sap, or the "fresh-water sea." The Malays residing in the country give it the name of the "Lake of Sri Rama." According to the accounts given of it by the natives, it is a voyage of a day and a night's journey across.

The next most considerable tribe, inhabiting the Cochin Chinese territories, are the people of Champa, called, in the Annam language, Loye, or Loi. The proper country of this race is that extending from Cape of St. James to at least as far as the province of Phu-yen, and, according to some accounts, even including this last. The people of Champa, before their subjugation by

the Cochin Chinese, formed a considerable state under a Chief, the seat of whose government was in the bay of Phan-rye, in the latitude of about 11° 10′ North. They profess, according to the notices which I have been enabled to collect, a species of Hindooism resembling the worship of Buddha or Jain, as these exist in Hindostan, and appear to have existed in Java before the conversion of the inhabitants of that island to the religion of Mohammed. At all events, it appears to differ widely from the Buddhism of the neighbouring countries. Numerous temples of hewn stone, containing Hindoo images, such as those of Siwa, Durga, and Buddha, are to be seen throughout the country, as I have been informed both by natives and European gentlemen; and in 1824, M. Diard, who had just passed through Champa, in travelling between Hué and Saigun, brought with him from thence to Singapore, a well-finished image in stone, which I soon recognised to be that of Ganeš, the Indian god of wisdom. The language of the people of Champa is a peculiar dialect, differing essentially both from the Annam and Kambojan.

The people of Champa appear to have maintained, in distant times, a considerable intercourse with various countries of the Malayan Archipelago; and about the middle of the fifteenth century, the Chronicles of Java state that the Queen of the principal sovereign of that island was a

princess of Champa: a fact which seems to point out that the religion of the two people must have been similar and their manners analogous.

Independent of the people of this race inhabiting the original country of Champa, an emigration from them appears, in some remote period, to have taken place to the eastern coast of the Gulf of Siam, between the eleventh and twelfth degrees of North latitude, where they have intermixed with Malayan settlers from the Peninsula, and, I am told, embraced the Mohammedan religion. Both the Champa and Malayan languages are still spoken by the inhabitants of this mixed colony, as I have had frequent opportunities of ascertaining from the crews of the boats of that country, which yearly visit Singapore.

Champa was subdued by the Cochin Chinese, from all I have been able to learn, between seventy and eighty years ago, and about the same period in which they wrested from Kamboja the province of Dong-nai. Since this event, the natives have retired from the sea-coast, which is now principally occupied by the Annam race. Like the Kambojans, they are treated harshly, are discontented, and in a state of frequent revolt; so that the Cochin Chinese Government is under the necessity of maintaining a number of fortresses on the hills and passes, as a security against their hostile incursions into the open country. These

works are stated to be all built on the principles of European fortification.

A third original race inhabits the Cochin Chinese territory, of whom little is known but their name, and that they are an uncivilized but inoffensive people. They are called by the Cochin Chinese, Moi, and are said still to form the bulk of the population in the province of Dong-nai, which is their original country.*

The strangers settled in the dominions of Cochin China consist of Malays, a mixed race of Portuguese Christians, and Chinese. The Malays, as already noticed, are confined to the eastern coast of the Gulf of Siam, between the latitudes of eleven and twelve degrees, their chief residence being at two places, called Pong-som and Kampot. Here they retain the Mohammedan religion, and speak their native language, although intermixed with a number of Champa and Kambojan words. Their numbers, from what I could learn, do not exceed 4 or 5000, and they are destitute of all political influence. Those amongst them with whom I conversed, claimed their origin from the Malayan principality of Johore; but at what time the emigration took place, or under what

* According to the *Nouvelles Lettres Édifiantes*, the country of the Moi is a strip of mountainous country, lying between Lao and Cochin China, in length, from north to south, about one hundred and twenty leagues, and having a breadth of from twenty to thirty.

circumstances, I could not learn. With this country, and with other Malayan states, such as Pahang, Kalantan, and Tringano, they maintain a commercial intercourse down to the present day, importing into those places rice, stic-lac, coarse cotton fabrics, and silk manufactured goods. It was two of these vessels that the navigator Dampier met at Pulo-Ubi, near one hundred and forty years ago, on their way to the Straits of Malacca, and which he describes as being the neatest and most dexterously managed of any native shipping he had met with in his travels; a character which is still maintained by them.

The Christian religion was introduced into Tonquin, Cochin China, and Kamboja, about the year 1624, by the Portuguese Jesuits from Macao, and after the persecution and massacre of the Portuguese in Japan. Consequent upon this transaction, and the subsequent one of the expulsion of the Portuguese from Malacca, about the middle of the same century, a number of Portuguese of the mixed race appear to have settled in those countries, where their descendants are still to be seen; hardly distinguished, however, from the natives of the country who have embraced Christianity.

The present King and his father have neither encouraged nor persecuted Christianity. Upon the whole, it has not for many years made any sensible progress. The prohibition against the plu-

rality of wives is said to be what is most repulsive in it to the habits and manners of the Cochin Chinese. In other respects, they are probably indifferent to its doctrines; but the Government will always view it with jealousy, as an innovation connected with a class of strangers, whose power and ambition are a source of well-founded alarm. The number of Christians in Tonquin was stated to me as amounting to three hundred thousand, which is, I think, the same number given at least fifty years ago. The number in Cochin China was given at one hundred thousand, and those in Kamboja at twenty-five thousand. This would give a total of four hundred and twenty-five thousand. One fact was generally admitted in the conversations which I held on this subject, —that the Christians were among the poorest and most abject part of the population. They have no political influence whatever, nor could I hear that since the death of the Prince who visited France along with the Bishop d'Adran, and who, to the great uneasiness of his parents, became a devout Christian, that Christianity has been professed by any person of rank or condition.

The *Chinese* form by far the most numerous class of strangers, although they are by no means proportionally so much so as in Siam, and in some countries of the Malayan Archipelago. The cause of this, in a situation naturally so favourable, is no doubt the vigilant and oppressive ri-

gour of the Government, and its more direct and troublesome interference with their industry, arising probably out of a political jealousy of the Chinese, which is not felt in the other countries in which they are settled. The first Chinese settlers are exempt from the conscription; and their descendants have a privilege, not granted to the natives, of paying a pecuniary composition in lieu of personal services, which amounts to fifteen quans a-year. The latter, before contracting a marriage, but not afterwards, are permitted freely to quit the country, which a native cannot do under any pretext. In Tonquin there are said to be about twenty-five thousand Chinese engaged in the iron, silver, and gold mines; and at the town of Cachao about a thousand, of greater respectability, engaged in trade. The number settled at Hué, the capital, is very small, and it was stated to me not to exceed six hundred. The Chinese of Fai-fó amount to about three thousand, and those of Saigun to five thousand. Besides these places, they are to be found in smaller numbers at Quin-hon, Kangkao, Pe-nom-peng, and other places, and perhaps the whole number within the dominions of Cochin China will not be overrated at forty thousand.

A material diversity of climate is found to obtain in the different subdivisions of the Cochin

Chinese Empire, resulting as well from difference of physical aspect as from geographical situation. In Cochin Chinese Kamboja, which may be described as extending from between the eighth and ninth to between the tenth and eleventh degrees of North latitude, and which is a low country, destitute of mountains, the seasons observe the same course as in Malabar, Bengal, and Siam; that is, the rains commence about the end of May, or beginning of June, and the wet season extends to September. This is the boisterous and inclement period of the year; and the opposite, the mild and serene one. At Saigun, towards the end of August, the thermometer in the shade stood, at six o'clock in the morning, at seventy-nine; at noon, at eighty-two; and at six in the evening, at eighty degrees. I have had no opportunity of ascertaining the temperature in the dry season.

The second climate embraces the sub-division of the Empire, called more strictly Cochin China, extending from about the latitude of eleven degrees to eighteen degrees; a hilly tract, with a high range of mountains running north and south. These last intercepting the clouds, produces the same effect upon the seasons as the central range of the Peninsula of Hindostan, or that of Celebes, with some other countries of the Indian Archipelago; that is, it reverses the seasons; so that, in Cochin China, a dry season prevails during the

south-west, and a wet one during the north-east monsoon. The rains, in Cochin China, set in in the end of October, and continue until March. When we left Saigun, in the beginning of September, the rainy season was nearly at a close; and before we quitted Hué and Turan, towards the end of October, it had just set in. M. Chaigneau, a French gentleman, who had resided many years at Hué, informed me, that the greatest summer heat which he had ever experienced, did not exceed thirty-one and a half of Reaumur's thermometer, about one hundred and three of Farenheit; and that the greatest winter cold did not fall under eleven, or about fifty-seven of Farenheit. He stated, however, that the sensible cold in the winter was much greater than the cold indicated by the thermometer, in consequence of the periodical rains falling upon this season of the year; a circumstance which often rendered the weather chilly and uncomfortable.

In the flat and alluvial tract which composes the principal part of the kingdom of Tonquin, the seasons are the same as in Kamboja and other countries of the Continent of Asia, exposed to the direct influence of the south-west monsoon; and, according to Dampier, Richard, and Bissachère, the rains commence in May and terminate in August. In this division the heat of summer is said to be occasionally excessive, and the cold of December, January, and February, to be very

sharp, and often rendered unpleasant by the prevalence of heavy fogs, as in the similar country and climate of Lower Bengal. With respect to hurricanes and typhoons, their utmost severity is experienced along the coast of Tonquin. They are more rarely felt on the coast of Cochin China, especially below the latitude of sixteen degrees North. Kamboja is exempt from them altogether.

In salubrity, the climates of the different subdivisions of the Empire were spoken favourably of by different European gentlemen with whom I conversed on the subject. Messrs. Vannier and Chaigneau, after they had each resided above thirty years in the country, spoke particularly in praise of the climates of Hué and Saigun; and, I think, the sturdy and active frames of the inhabitants may be fairly adduced as proof of their goodness.

Our short residence in Cochin China afforded us but a very inadequate opportunity of prosecuting inquiries in the department of Natural History. Wherever we had an opportunity of examining the geological formation, it was primitive; and the principal mountains from Cape St. James to Hué appear to be composed of granite or syenite. Some of the lower hills and partial formations consisted of quartz, rock, marble, and mountain lime-stone. The subdivision of Kamboja, as might be reckoned upon from its for-

mation, is remarkably poor in metallic productions, iron being, from all accounts, the only metal which it affords in any quantity; but even of this, the supply is inadequate to the consumption of the country, and the greater part of this is obtained from Tonquin, Siam, and recently from the European establishments in the Straits of Malacca. The subdivision of Cochin China is equally destitute of metallic wealth, as Kamboja. The Cochin Chinese believe that the mountains at Cape Varela afford silver, and this is reported by M. Dayot. Cochin China, however, receives its principal supply, both of the useful and precious metals, from Tonquin. The metallic wealth of this last subdivision of the kingdom makes up for the deficiency of the other two, for it abounds in iron, gold, and silver. The following information respecting these mines was given to me at Hué, by a Chinese merchant who had visited them. The iron mines are about six days' journey from Cachao, the capital; and the gold and silver mines, about twelve days' journey, in a westerly direction, from the same place. The silver mines are estimated to produce yearly about one hundred piculs, or about 213,600 ounces; but I could not learn the amount of the gold, a large portion of which is said to be smuggled into the neighbouring Chinese provinces of Yunan and Quang-sai. According to the P. de Marini Romain, the silver mines were wrought, for

the first time, in 1625 or 1630, and he states their situation to have been in the northern provinces, which he calls Bao and Ciucanghe. All the mines, whether of gold, silver, or iron, are at present worked by Chinese; and I was informed that the number of this people, natives of the island of Hai-nan and of the provinces of Kiang-nan and Fo-kien, engaged in this labour, or in employments accessary to it, amount to from twenty to thirty thousand.

The useful vegetable productions of such parts of the country as we visited, did not appear to differ from those that are well known in similar latitudes in other parts of India. Marsh rice is cultivated universally in the low countries; and within the tracts of inundation of the great rivers of Kamboja and Tonquin, the produce is said to be steady, and very abundant. The reverse is obviously the case in the thin sandy soils of the central parts of the kingdom, or Cochin China Proper, which are incapable of affording sufficient food for their own inhabitants, and draw a large share of their supply of corn from Tonquin and Kamboja.

The only other articles of food, which we observed to be raised in Cochin China in considerable quantity, were maize, the earth nut, or *Arachis hypogæa*, the Igname, or *Convolvulus Batatas*, and the cocoa nut. The Areca palm is extensively reared in Kamboja and Tonquin, from both of

which countries the nut is extensively exported to China; and the production of the former is more highly esteemed by the Chinese than that of any other.

The best fruits of Cochin China are the orange and lichi. They were not in season during our visit, but I have seen the oranges of Saigun brought to Singapore in the months of February and March, and they were of great size and excellent flavour, much surpassing those brought from China in the same season of the year. The mangosteen and durian, which are so highly prized in the Malay Islands and Siam, it is a little remarkable, are unknown in any part of the Cochin Chinese dominions. One might have expected to have found them in Kamboja, where the climate and soil are, no doubt, suitable, and to which the Malays have long ago emigrated, but I have only heard of a few trees of the first reared for curiosity in the King's gardens at Penom-peng.

The sugar-cane is cultivated to a considerable extent in the provinces of Kwang-ai and Kwang-nam, which lie immediately to the southward of the capital; but not much in Kamboja, and still less in Tonquin. The Cochin Chinese themselves are both the cultivators and manufacturers, and receive no assistance from the Chinese, as in the neighbouring countries; and from hence, I have no doubt, arises the inferiority of the Cochin

Chinese sugar, which ranks below that of Siam, of the Philippines, and of Java, being dark in colour and badly granulated. The quantity exported was stated to me variously at from twenty to sixty thousand piculs, the greater part of which is sent to China from the port of Fai-fo, near the bay of Turan. About five thousand piculs are annually brought into the European Settlements in the Straits of Malacca.

Black pepper, of good quality, but in small quantity, is produced in some parts of Central Cochin China, but is neither of cheapness nor of sufficient quantity to admit of being exported. The portion of Kamboja under the dominion of Cochin China produces the same fine cardamums yielded in Siam, and so much sought after in China. Of these there are exported from Saigun yearly about eight hundred piculs. Tonquin produces another article, which is largely exported to China, and which is known in the Annam language by the name of *Chao-kwo*. Specimens of it were shown to us at Fai-fo, and I imagine it to be a large and coarse species of *Amomum*.

The true cinnamon (*Laurus Cinnamomum*) is most probably an indigenous product of Cochin China, but we had no personal opportunities of examining the specific characters of the plant. The part of the country affording it is Central Cochin China, in the dry and sandy districts lying north-west of the town of Fai-fo. It is found

in small quantities in the wild state; but by far the greater part of what is known in commerce, is the produce of cultivation. No less than ten varieties are known in the markets; but whether these be the produce of different species of laurel, or the effects of different modes of culture, preparation, and soils, we had no means of determining. Specimens of the different kinds were shown to me at Fai-fo, and they were all highly fragrant, of an agreeable flavour, and containing a large quantity of essential oil. The bark of some of these varieties was extremely thin, but that of others thick, and the latter was generally preferred by the Chinese merchants. None of the kinds were freed from the *epidermis;* and therefore, so far, they were unsuited to the European market. The greater part of what is produced is exported to China, to the extent, according to the information which was given to me, of between two hundred and fifty and three hundred thousand pounds yearly. In that country it is greatly preferred to the cinnamon of Ceylon. The price of the coarsest description was stated to us, at Fai-fo, as low as twelve quans the picul, but the ordinary kinds may be reckoned at from fifty to sixty quans. A most extravagant value is put upon small quantities of a very fine sort, which is reserved for the King's use, and which is obtained by private individuals only with the utmost difficulty. Some of this is valued as high as six hun-

dred quans the picul, and select parts at the enormous price of one thousand Spanish dollars. It is remarkable, that this high-priced cinnamon should find a market in the neighbouring provinces of Kwang-si and Canton; the former of which, it is said, produces the cassia, which is so largely exported to Europe.

Anise-seed (*Pimpinella Anisum*) is a production of Kamboja, and about three thousand piculs of it are annually exported from Saigun to China by the junks.

Cotton is grown in considerable quantity throughout the country, and exported by the Chinese junks. I was informed by the Chinese, that the quality is so much superior to that of Bengal, that in the market of Canton it is worth twenty per cent. more.

The mulberry (*Morus alba*) is extensively cultivated in Tonquin and Cochin China Proper, as food for the silk-worm. We observed the cultivation in considerable quantity close to the capital; and small patches, indeed, were every where grown near the villages, for the rearing of silk-worms is a very general object of attention with the peasantry. The silk of Cochin China, and even that of Tonquin, which is better, is, like every other produce of the country demanding the exercise of skill and intelligence, greatly inferior to that of China. The hank, or skene, is too short to be suited at present for the European

market; and the material itself is deprived of its gloss and beauty, by using water which is too hot in reeling off the cocoons, the gummy matter being by this means dissolved. When we were in Cochin China, the price of raw silk was from three and a half to five quans per cattie, according to quality; and I was informed that Fai-fo and its neighbourhood might then afford for exportation yearly about two hundred piculs, Hué about sixty, and Cachao, in Tonquin, from eight hundred to one thousand. There is reason to believe that this is one of the subjects upon which Cochin Chinese industry might be most successfully employed, were a steady demand created by the establishment of an active foreign trade.

Tea is produced in Cochin China and Tonquin, but not in Kamboja. From the best accounts, it is a variety of the same species (Thea Bohea) which is grown in China, coarse and inferior in quality, from careless cultivation and preparation, —possibly also from some inferior suitableness of soil and climate. The leaf is twice or thrice the size of that of bohea tea, and the preparation so slovenly, that when I first observed it in the market of Saigun, I imagined it, until more closely examined, a quantity of chopped tobacco-leaf. Although the leaf is large and rank, it possesses little bitterness or flavour; and to obtain its virtues, it is always boiled, instead of being infused like Chinese tea. The Cochin Chinese drink it

in large bowls, with or without sugar, and consider it as highly refreshing after fatigue. We made a trial of it at Hué, and did not find it disagreeable. The plant is only grown in hilly parts of the country; so that we had but a very partial opportunity of examining it. The best is produced in the province of Kwang-yi. At an average, it costs from six to eight quans the picul for the coarser sorts; but some of the most esteemed rises to twenty quans. Of the appearance and use of the Cochin Chinese tea plant, a sensible and exact account is rendered by the P. de Marini Romain, as early as 1666. The culture of the tea plant in Tonquin and Cochin China, does not prevent the importation of a considerable quantity of tea from China; and it is this, and not the produce of the country, which is generally consumed by all persons of condition.

The Kambojan part of the kingdom, and Tonquin, both afford stic-lac of the same fine quality with that of Siam. Eagle-wood, an object of royal monopoly, is brought from the country of the Song, who, I believe, are the same tribe denominated by the Siamese, Chong. This is in the highest esteem amongst the people of the country and the Chinese, not only as an incense, but for imagined medicinal virtues.

Cochin China and Tonquin produce a root bearing some external resemblance to that of the *Dioscorea alata*, or common yam, which is rich

in a reddish brown colouring matter. It is called in the Annam language Năo, and in the dialect of Canton, Shu-leong. This is largely exported to China, as well as consumed in the country, as a dye stuff. We had no opportunity of seeing the fresh plant, or of determining its botanical character; but were informed that it is a spontaneous product of the mountainous and uncultivated parts of the country.

The teak-tree (*Tectona grandis*), which abounds so much in the forest of Siam and Pegue, is, as far as we could learn, a stranger to every part of the Cochin Chinese territory. Both Tonquin and Cochin China appear to be deficient in large and good timber; but this observation does not apply to Kamboja, which is abundantly supplied. Two descriptions of timber, called in the Annam and Chinese languages, Chao, or Sao, and Go, both of very large size, are the most in use and most esteemed. The first is used in house building, and in the construction of junks. The whole of the gun-carriages of the arsenals of Hué and Saigun are also of this timber. In point of durability and strength, it does not appear to be much inferior to teak itself, but it is less buoyant.* The Go, called by Loureiro, *Nunclea ori-*

* Such was the information obtained by us from personal inquiry on the spot; but it is necessary to add, that Loureiro includes teak among the plants of Cochin China, and expressly states that it is the same which is called in the text, Chao, or

entalis, is a hard, black, and heavy timber, admitting of a fine polish. This is used for furniture, and especially for those large broad benches which are in such general use with the Cochin Chinese.

From all accounts, the zoology of Cochin China does not differ very remarkably, at least in its ordinary features, from that of similar Indian climates. The quadrupeds of the country are the bear; the dog, resembling that of China, but smaller, and used, as in that country, as food; the tiger, of the same size, strength, and ferocity as in Bengal; with the spotted leopard, the cat, the elephant, the hog; the rhinoceros, of which the horn, on account of its supposed medicinal virtues, is in much request; the horse, several species of deer, the ox, and the buffalo. Those accustomed to Hindostan, miss in this country, as in Siam, the jackal, the fox, the hare, the ass, and the sheep. The animals domesticated by the Cochin Chinese are the elephant, the horse, the buffalo and ox, the goat, the hog, the dog, the cat; and among poultry, the goose, duck, and common fowl.

The elephant of Cochin China appeared to us to be a very fine animal, and equal fully to those of the eastern parts of Bengal. The forests of

Sao. He calls it Tectona Theka, giving its Annam name Cay Sao, or Sao-wood, with its Malayan synonyme jatus from Rumphius.

Kamboja produce the greatest numbers, and those of the best quality. I am told that in that country the price of a new elephant does not exceed forty or fifty quans. The white elephant is not, as in Siam, Pegue, and Ava, an object of veneration. There were none at Hué or Saigun; nor could I learn that the forests, from which the principal supply is derived, produced any of this variety. The Cochin Chinese use the elephant in war, but, from the natural timidity of the animal, probably to little purpose. The horse of Cochin China is a small, shabby-looking pony, inferior in size and beauty to the small horses of the Indian islands. They are used only for riding, and do not, indeed, appear to be fit either for agricultural labour, or for the purposes of a cavalry.

The buffalo was the animal which we constantly observed used for field labour, although it is not improbable but the ox may be so applied in parts of the country where the soil is drier and lighter. We found the buffalo at Saigun to be the same large and powerful animal as in Siam and in the Indian islands; but as we proceeded northward, and especially about Hué, it was a much inferior animal, in all respects; a fact which seems to indicate that this quadruped exists in perfection only in countries close to the Equator. The ox is a small animal, uniformly of a reddish-brown colour, and destitute of the hump so remarkable in the cattle of Western India. Neither the flesh

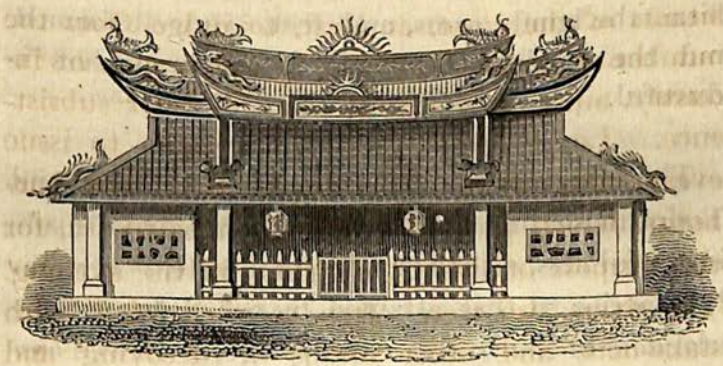
of the buffalo nor ox is used by the Cochin Chinese as food; and, as I have already noticed, they hold milk in abhorrence. A small variety of goat is tolerably frequent; and we saw, both at Saigun and Hué, a few shabby and diminutive sheep, which were kept more for curiosity than use.

The hog is a great favourite with the Cochin Chinese. In the wild state it is found in all parts of the country; and the breed, which is domesticated, is remarkably handsome and compact. We observed at Hué that the hogs were universally stall-fed, and seldom permitted to roam at large.

The poultry of Cochin China, especially that of Saigun, is the finest I have seen in India, and is cheap and abundant. The common fowl, in the wild state, is found in the Cochin Chinese forests, as we had ourselves an opportunity of ascertaining, and they are reared in considerable abundance; but, I believe, less on account of their flesh than to gratify the propensity, which is so general amongst the Cochin Chinese, for cock-fighting. Several species of wild duck visit the country in the cold season, as birds of passage, when they are to be seen in vast flocks, covering the rivers, lakes, marshes, and rice-fields. The common duck is reared in vast quantities, and we had opportunities of seeing flocks which could not be less in number than a thousand. We saw geese only at Saigun, but in considerable num-

bers; large, always white, and a different variety from what is reared in China.

The seas and rivers of Cochin China appeared to be well stored with fish, from which the inhabitants of the coast, at least, to judge from the number of persons engaged in this branch of industry, must draw a great share of their subsistence. Large fleets of boats were seen to issue every morning from the creeks, bays, and harbours, which proceeded several miles to sea, for the purpose of fishing, returning in the evening. The rivers also were often seen crowded with stake-nets, and other means of decoying and catching fish.



Cochin Chinese Temple, near Saigun.

CHAPTER VI.

Personal appearance of the Cochin Chinese.—Progress in useful Arts.—Language.—Dress.—Character.—Government.—Military Force.—Revenue.—Laws.—Religion.

In their persons, the Annam race, comprehending under this name both the Cochin Chinese and Tonquinese, for there is very little difference between them, are a short, squat, and ill-favoured people. They are probably lower in stature than any people of Central Asia. Their limbs are strong and well formed, and they are altogether active and hardy. In point of features, they bear a nearer resemblance to the Malays than to any other people; but there is no ferocity in their

expression; on the contrary, their countenances exhibit an air of cheerfulness and good humour. The women appeared to us to be, to a remarkable degree, fairer and handsomer than the men. With them, the hands, arms, and feet, are well formed, and the carriage even of the lower orders is graceful.

The progress which the Cochin Chinese and Tonquinese, but especially the latter, have made in useful arts, although very moderate, is certainly superior to that attained by the Siamese,—the islanders of the Indian Archipelago, or indeed any people of Eastern Asia—the Hindoos, Chinese, and Japanese excepted. In this, as in other matters, they are humble and distant imitators of the Chinese. Cotton is raised by them in considerable abundance, and of good quality; and from this material there is fabricated, particularly in Tonquin, a coarse durable cloth, at so low a price, that it would not be easy to supplant it by the introduction of European manufactures under the most favourable circumstances. They manufacture no fine cotton fabric, nor any thing indeed approaching to it, and they appear ignorant of the art of calico printing in any form. Cloths, indeed, of a variety of colours, are not used in the dress of the people, and are generally repugnant to their tastes. The art which they have carried to the greatest extent, is that of rearing the silk-

worm and weaving silk; but both the raw silk of Cochin China and its silk fabrics are of very inferior quality to those of China. During our early connexion with the Tonquinese, they enjoyed a great reputation for the fine varnish which their country produced, and for their skill in the manufacture of lackered ware. In the Abbé Richard's History of Tonquin, an ample but not scientific account is given of the tree which yields this commodity, as well as of the mode of preparing its produce. This tree is cultivated, and the produce either exported to China or used in the country. The lowest sort of varnish costs from ten to twelve quans the picul, and the best from twenty-two to twenty-three. The manufacture of lackered ware is still carried on extensively in Tonquin. From the ordinary sort, which is cheap, is made a variety of utensils in pretty general use. There is an expensive manufacture of lackered ware, richly inlaid with mother of pearl, or flowered with gold, or both, which is used by persons of rank as betel boxes and similar articles. Of this description, which is richer and handsomer than any Japan ware, we obtained several specimens when at Hué. It is scarcely necessary to mention, that the smelting and working of the useful and precious metals have been long known to the Cochin Chinese and Tonquinese. It is in the arts connected with these that they display to the greatest advantage that singular skill in

imitation which has been so often remarked in all semi-barbarous people. The beautiful brass cannon cast in the arsenal of Hué, are the most extraordinary specimens of this skill. In 1823, when Resident of Singapore, I presented to the Minister of Elephants, with the sanction of the Governor-General of India, a highly finished double-barrelled English fowling-piece: it was sent from Turan to Hué by the English gentleman entrusted to deliver it. In the course of a fortnight it was returned, along with another double-barrelled gun fabricated, within that short time, in the King's arsenal. The imitation was so perfect, that it was very difficult, at first sight, to distinguish the copy from the model. This effort afforded not only a proof of Cochin Chinese ingenuity, but also of Cochin Chinese vanity; for its evident object was to show, that Cochin China was not dependent upon foreign nations for any thing. But, in truth, the imitation was more in appearance than in reality; for the Cochin Chinese artists are ignorant of tempering iron and steel: they are quite incapable of manufacturing an useful gun-lock; and therefore, with all their dexterity in imitation, they depend wholly upon European nations for a supply of fire-arms.*

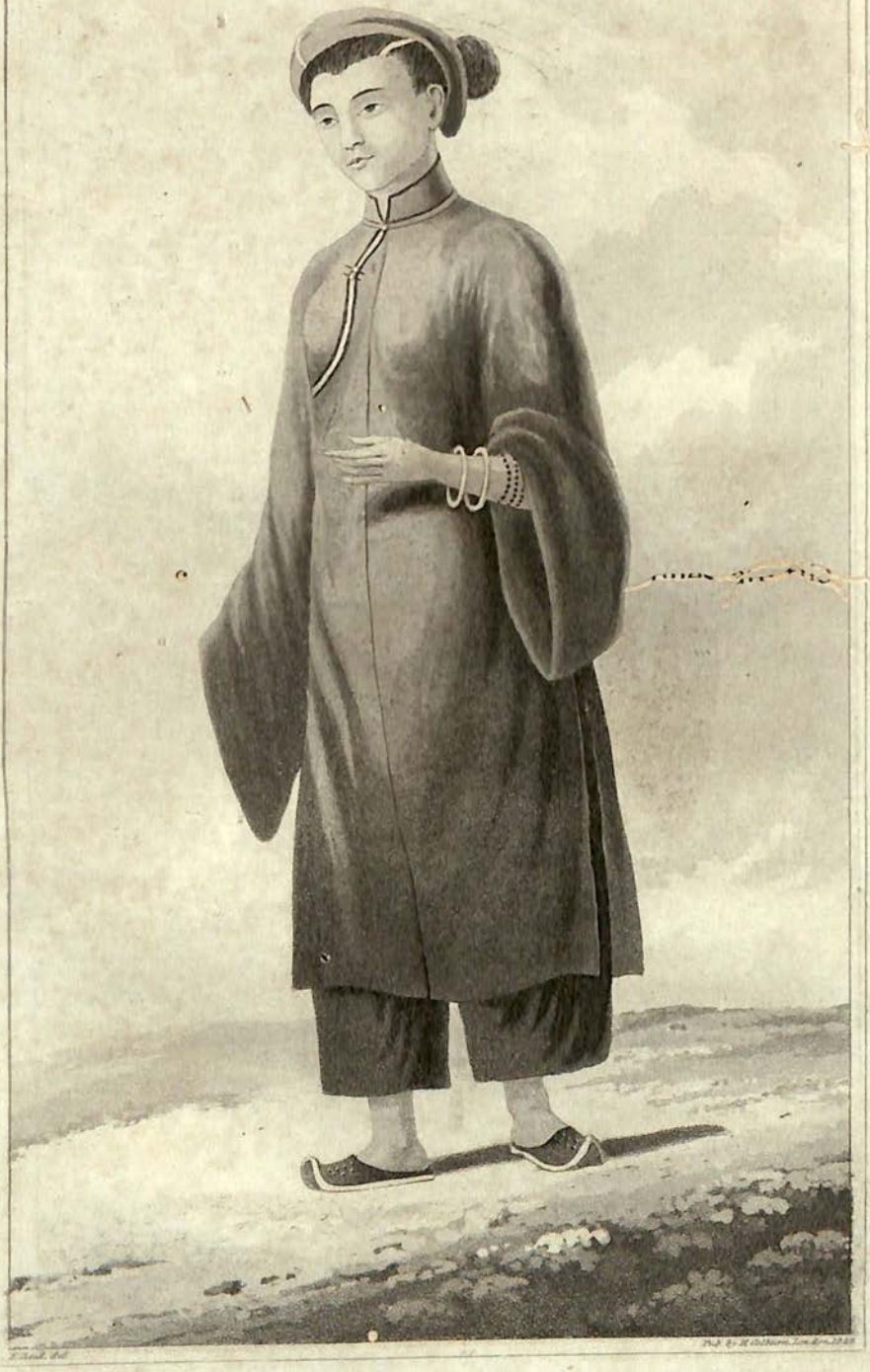
* It is sufficient to cast the eyes over the Cochin Chinese list of exports and imports, to convey an unfavourable impression of the industry of the natives. In effect, when one sees the Chinese purchase at Turan and Saigun the raw silk, which they import

The Annam language, or that of the race inhabiting Tonquin and Cochin China,—for there is

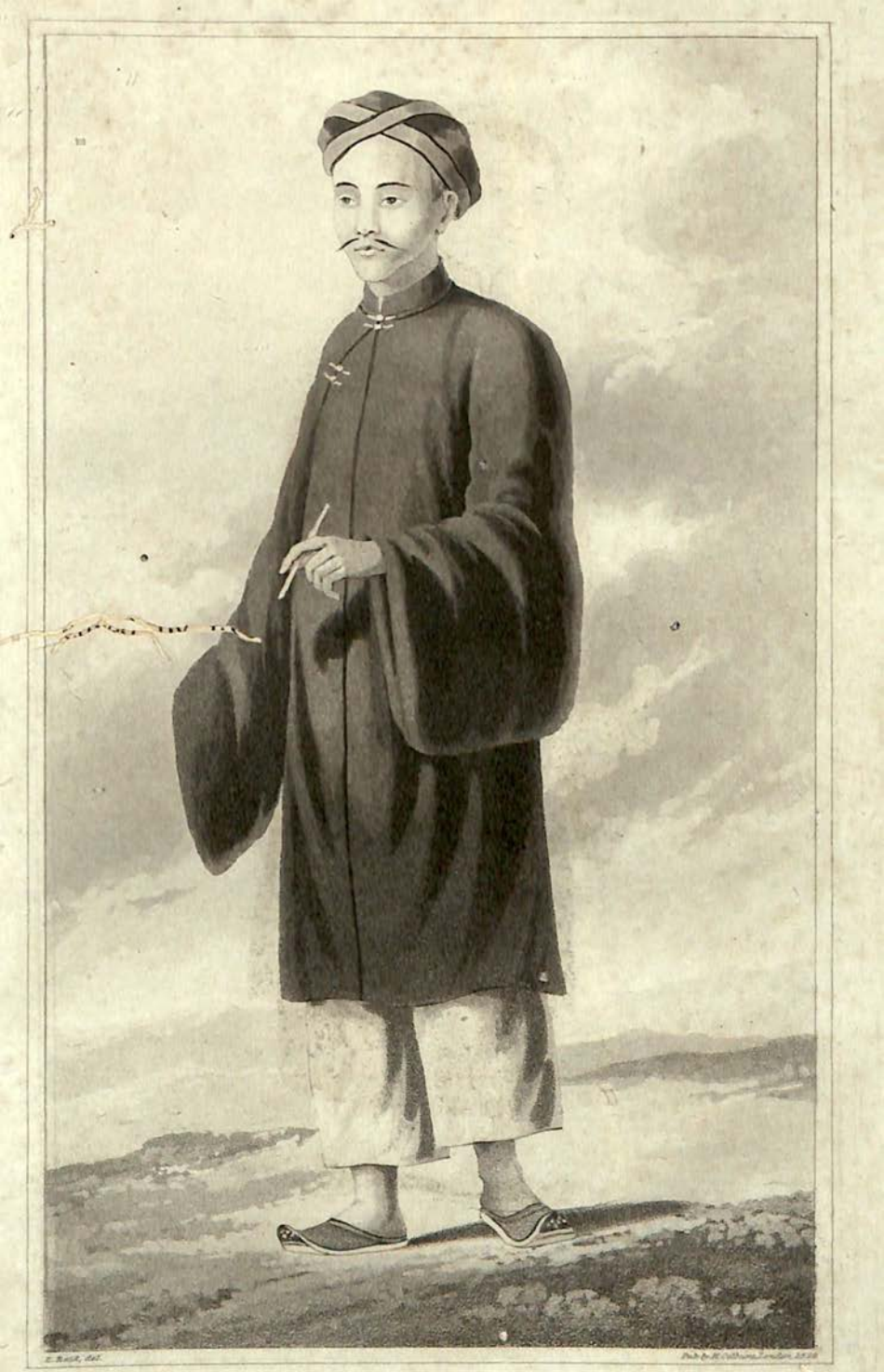
again in a manufactured state; when one knows that the toys which they sell to the Cochin Chinese at so high a price, are the same buffalo bones which they had obtained from them in exchange for bad pottery, what is to be thought of the arts and commerce of such a country? The fluctuation in price of certain articles of food, their sudden rise and fall, on the other hand the affluence of the resident Chinese, whose agents traverse the country, and the rapidity of the fortunes which they make, all must convince us that the trade is to China a mine discovered perhaps with less skill than good fortune. Almost all the arts of first necessity are exercised in Cochin China. The art of smelting and working metals is understood, as well as to spin cotton and to weave it; to prepare silk, and to make it; to construct ships, and manufacture their equipments. You will there find goldsmiths, blacksmiths, carpenters, joiners, &c. but none of these arts or trades have risen above mediocrity. The iron which they smelt, will not afford, when wrought, forty per cent. in small work, nor thirty in large bars. They have some knowledge of the art of tempering it, but their tools are always either too soft or too brittle. They work better in copper; the reason is obvious, it is always prepared by the Chinese. As to gold and silver, their artificers succeed in filagree, without, however, being able to give their work the requisite polish. If however, in these arts and in others which it is unnecessary to name, the Cochin Chinese are little advanced, it is not for want either of intelligence or address. They want only models. Do not expect invention from them, but be assured that their talent for imitation will never be in fault. It is thus that, instructed by us, they have perfected to an extraordinary degree their naval and military architecture. You would suppose their galleys from some European dock-yard, if their sail of matting, their cordage of the roots of trees, or the husk of the cocoa nut, and the thickness of their planks, did not indicate a foreign construction. Their cannon foundery is another proof of the sagacity with which they know how to profit by instruction and example. The

no difference except now and then a trifling one in enunciation, — is a monosyllabic tongue, in structure and general character resembling the provincial dialects of China. Meagre and destitute of inflexions, it is readily acquired by a stranger, with the material exception of pronunciation. This last is a matter of nearly insuperable difficulty, although of more importance than in any other class of languages. The Cochin Chinese and Tonquinese have no literature and no written character of their own, and receive all their books from the Chinese, to whom they look up as their instructors. In writing the Chinese symbolical characters, although the elementary ones are the same, they make considerable changes in combining them. On this account, although the Cochin Chinese have no difficulty in comprehending a Chinese manuscript, a Chinese scholar requires some practice before he can decypher a Cochin Chinese one. A dictionary of the Annam language was early composed by Father Alexander De Rhodes, one of the first Cochin Chinese missionaries, the explanation of which was in the Latin language; but one of superior accuracy exists in manuscript, by the Bishop of Adran, explained in French, which was in general use amongst the

reigning monarch (Gialong), desiring to leave to posterity some memorials of his reign, has caused nine cannon to be cast, carrying each about a ninety-pound ball, and the experiment has succeeded completely."—*Manuscript of M. Chaigneau.*



COCHINCHINESE LADY.



COCHINCHINESE MANDARIN.

European adventurers during the late Revolution.*

The dress of both sexes is becoming,—and the same as the old costume of China, before the Chinese were compelled to adopt the fantastic one of their Tartar conquerors. Both sexes dress nearly alike. For the lower part of the body, the covering consists of a pair of loose trowsers, secured at the waist by a sash. The main portion of dress consists of two or more loose frocks, reaching half-way down the thigh. This, for such matters as among other Eastern people is uniform and constant, overlaps to the right side, and is secured by five buttons and as many loops. Its sleeves are loose, and with persons not compelled to labour, they dangle a foot, or even a foot and a half, beyond the extremities of the fingers; but the lower orders, from necessity, wear them short.

* Shall I speak of their literati, who pass a great part of their lives in the study of their own language and that of China,—monosyllabic tongues, of which every word, varying in meaning, according to pronunciation, may signify ten or a dozen things entirely different? They have no books but Chinese books. The philosophy of Confucius, and for a few Medicine, are the objects of their habitual study. Would it be believed that the system of Brown is to be found in Cochin China, were it not known that reveries make the circle of the globe? The physicians are divided between two opinions; the one party employing only stimulants, and the other refrigerants. Fashion runs in favour of the first. Some miraculous cures are quoted by this practice, which is conceivable in a country where the fibre is relaxed, and man is exposed to a crowd of debilitating causes."—*Manuscript of M. Chaigneau.*

With the women, the inner frock reaches below the knee, and the outer down to the ankles. When a Cochin Chinese is in full dress, as when he makes visits, or is engaged in the performance of religious rites, he always wears over the frocks now mentioned a loose silk gown reaching to the ankles. The hair of the head is worn long, and put up in a knot at the back of the head, as was practised by the Chinese before the present absurd fashion was imposed upon them by the Tartars. Both sexes wear turbans, which are put on with much neatness. The form of this article of dress, which is always determinate, distinguishes the civil from the military order of public officers. The lower orders, except when dressed, seldom wear these turbans. When abroad, both sexes wear varnished straw hats, little less than two feet in diameter, tied under the chin. These, which are sometimes in the form of an inverted basin, and at others resembling a sugar-loaf, afford, however grotesque in appearance, good protection against sun and rain. The materials of dress consist of silk or cotton; the first being of more frequent use than I have observed in any other country. The inner frock is cotton of domestic manufacture, always unbleached; for, literally, there is not a rag of white linen in the kingdom. The outer frocks and gown, with the better ranks, are always of silk, or flowered gauze; and the latter is commonly Chinese ma-

nufacture. The trowsers, with the same class, are either plain silk, or crape of domestic fabric. The turban is crape, always black or blue, but most frequently the former; and this is also a home fabric. The lower orders are generally clad in cotton; but, even among them, silk is not unfrequently to be seen. Their cotton dress is very generally dyed of a dark brown colour, as if tanned. This colour is given to it by the tuberous root which I have mentioned in another place. Ornaments of the precious metals, or gems, do not appear to be very general. The women wear occasionally armlets and bracelets of gold. Where gems are worn, those of most frequent use are pearls, and amber brought from Yu-nan. The women wear ear-rings, and secure the hair by a bodkin with an ornamented gold-head. Men of all ranks, and women above the labouring class, always carry about them a pair of silken bags, or purses, strung together, and usually carried in the hand, or thrown over the shoulders. These are intended to carry betel, tobacco, and money. Women of the labouring class are forbidden to use these; and men of the same order, when they meet a person of condition, must take them off their shoulders and conceal them, as a mark of respect. These purses are generally of blue satin, and with the better classes often richly embroidered. The shoes that are worn by the Cochin Chinese are slippers without heels. It may

here be remarked, that the Chinese fashion of little feet among the women is unknown to the Cochin Chinese. The royal colour is yellow, or rather orange. The King's own standard is of this colour, but the national flag is white. Cloth, figured with an emblematic dragon, can only be worn by a few officers of the highest class. White is considered mourning, and cotton only is used under such circumstances. It is not only the mourner that is put in this livery, but his equipage also, including his litter, or palanquin, and his boat.

The mixture of the areca, betel-pepper and quick-lime, is constantly masticated by the Cochin Chinese. They do not, however, add catechu to the ingredients, like the Malays and other inhabitants of the Eastern Archipelago; but their immediate neighbours the Kambojans do,—a circumstance probably attributable to the long intercourse which has subsisted between the latter and the Malayan countries, from which they still continue to derive their supply of this commodity.

The Cochin Chinese are also addicted, to an extraordinary degree, to the use of tobacco; which they not only chew with their betel, but smoke in the form of small segars wrapped up in paper. A Cochin Chinese of rank is seldom to be seen without one of these in his mouth, and an assemblage of persons of condition will be seen literally enveloped in an atmosphere of tobacco smoke.

The Cochin Chinese, in character, are a mild and docile people. The lower orders are remarkable for their liveliness. They are always to be seen talking and laughing, as if they had nothing to complain of,—as if they were living under one of the mildest and most beneficent governments in the world, instead of being the slaves of a most oppressive and despotic one. These gay and sprightly manners are far, however, from being approved. One of the French gentlemen, who had long resided in the country, stated to us, when we expressed ourselves pleased with the cheerful manners of the lower classes, that laughing and merriment were deemed worthy of the bamboo. The higher classes accordingly affect the grave and solemn demeanour of the Chinese. In their habits and persons, the Cochin Chinese are an uncleanly—a dirty people. Like other Indians, they perform frequent ablutions; but, notwithstanding this, their hair, their skins, their hands, including the long nails which they are so fond of wearing, are absolutely impure. Their linen, not bleached at first, seems never to be washed afterwards. At home, they wear their foul cotton shirts; and when they go abroad, without changing them, they clap over them their fine silk robes. This neglect of personal cleanliness they perhaps carry to a greater length than any of the nations of the further East; but they are in no small de-

gree kept in countenance by their neighbours the Burmans, the Siamese, and even the Chinese; and it is certainly from none of the people east of the Burrumpooter that the European notion of washing with "oriental scrupulosity," has been borrowed. There are other points also on which the Cochin Chinese evince much indelicacy and indecorum. The men, for example, were constantly seen by us, at Hué, either bathing in the river, or plying their boats in a state of perfect nudity. The nature of their diet may also be referred to, as evidence of grossness. It is impure and indiscriminate. They eat vermin, and the flesh of the alligator; hatched eggs with them are a delicacy; and their favourite sauce is a kind of *soy*, in part, at least, composed of the juices of putrid fish, and which, both from taste and odour, would be intolerable to any other people. Like the Siamese, they are nationally very vain, and consider themselves the first people in the world, being hardly disposed to yield the palm even to the Chinese—the only strangers whom they are disposed to consider *respectable*. They consider the Kambojans, as mentioned in another place, as barbarians, and scarcely think the Siamese much better. But, their nationality, excessive as it is, is much less offensive than that of the Siamese; for with strangers they are sociable, good-humoured, and obliging. In our intercourse with the Siamese, we

found them little better than sturdy beggars, from the highest to the lowest. The Cochin Chinese officers of Government, from all accounts, are sufficiently rapacious also; although, from the nature of our intercourse, we had few opportunities of witnessing any display of it, but the lower classes were far from evincing any disposition of this sort. We found them throughout kind and hospitable, receiving the little presents we made to them thankfully, but always anxious to make some return.*

* The state of society in Cochin China is thus described in the manuscript of M. Chaigneau.—"There are but two classes in Cochin China,—the people, and the nobility or Mandarins. Nobility is personal and hereditary; but time, which in Europe adds unceasingly to the hereditary nobility, destroys it by little and little in Cochin China. The son of a Mandarin of the first class will only be of the second. If he be in actual employ as such, his children again shall be of the third class; but if he shall not have been so employed, the children, after his death, shall return forthwith into the ranks of the people. In each generation nobility descends by one step at least, unless by his talents or his services the descendant of a Mandarin should merit preferment. This preferment is refused to no one. At the present moment almost all the great Mandarins, the Chiefs of *the five columns* of the Empire, have been common soldiers. One fact may serve to give a just idea of the little importance which is attached in Cochin China to what we call *Birth*. When it was under consideration to give to M. Chaigneau the letters of the rank which the Emperor had bestowed upon him, as the Mandarin in charge of the archives is always very punctilious concerning forms, he came much perplexed to ask the Sovereign what should be done in order to describe the family of the new officer. '*He is not of the country,*' replied the Emperor; '*he is a stranger, and therefore of my family.*' There is not only

The Government of Cochin China is extremely despotical, both in theory and practice. It pretends, however, like that of China, which it imitates in every thing, to be patriarchal or paternal; and the object held out, is to rule the kingdom as a private family—the chief instrument, however, being the rod. Nothing seems to bound the authority of the King, but the fear of insur-

generosity in this reply, but there is also to be seen from it, that in the eyes of him who spoke, true nobility consisted in having served well. As to the people, properly so called, one would believe them happy; if to be so, it were enough to live at a small expense in a fine climate. But what an existence is a life passed in contempt, under vexations, the ratan, and the corvées? A Cochin Chinese has nothing which he can call his own,—not even that life which nature intended to make agreeable and easy to him. Notwithstanding, gay by character, he is also gentle, humane, sensible, hospitable; but joins to these good qualities all the vices which slavery and weakness of character engender. He may be reproached with inconstancy, fickleness, a vague restlessness, which makes him a ready instrument of revolt, a strong disposition to theft, all the extravagances of superstition, and the love of gaming carried the length of frenzy. Rice and fish form the principal nourishment of the Cochin Chinese. Of these they consume an extraordinary quantity; but the land is so fertile, and the sea so abounds in fish, that these two resources appear inexhaustible. Pork, beef, and poultry, form also a part of their food. All these are at a low price. They extract from rice a kind of ardent spirit, of which some drink to excess. The repast commences with animal food, and this is the signal for getting intoxicated. The rice once served, they drink no more spirits. After the repast, each guest swallows a copious draught of water, and washes his hands. There they are until the next meal, and you will not be able to persuade them to take any thing in the interval."—*Manuscript of M. Chaigneau.*

rection, and such immemorial and indefinite usages as exist in all countries, however bad their government. The nobility is entirely a nobility of office, and their power to do good or evil is solely derived from the authority of the sovereign. The municipal government, as in China, is vested in two classes of mandarins, or chiefs; the one civil, and the other military. These mandarins are divided into ten orders, of which the two first compose the King's council. This department of the administration is as follows:—Each province is administered by a governor, being a military mandarin; a deputy-governor, and a sub-governor; both civil mandarins. To all acts, administrative or judicial, the concurrence of these three persons is indispensable; and it would appear that, notwithstanding the inferior rank of the civil officers, it often happens, from their superior acquirements and knowledge of business, that they possess more real authority than the nominal superior. In the event of insurrection or war, the latter acts on his own sole authority, and exercises the power of life and death. Every province is divided into three departments, called *Huyen;* and each department into three or four districts, called *Tou;* which again consist of an indefinite number of villages. The administration of each Huyen is confided to two mandarins of the civil order, under whom are other subordinate mandarins, who preside over the *Tous,* or districts. The inferior officers, adminis-

tering the departments and districts, are appointed by the Court, on the recommendation of the three superior mandarins of the province. The chiefs of the village are elected by the peasantry from among their own number; an ancient institution, recommended to the Government, no doubt, by its utility and efficiency. This person is answerable for the collection of the taxes, and for keeping the rolls of the conscription.

The general administration is conducted by a Supreme Council and six Ministers of State. The latter are as follow:—the Minister of Ceremonies and Religion; the Keeper of the Records and Archives; the Minister of War; the Treasurer; the Minister of Justice; and the Minister of Woods and Forests, whose functions embrace the charge of all public buildings, and the Superintendence of the Navy. Besides these six ministers and the council of state, there are three superior officers, called *Kun*. One of these is Viceroy of Tonquin, another Viceroy of Kamboja, and the third Minister of Elephants. This last person is properly the Prime Minister, as well as Minister for Foreign Affairs.

In Cochin China, as in Siam, the Government claims the services of the whole male adult population; an institution which appears to have existed for ages, and which forms the worst feature of the administration. Every male inhabitant, from the age of eighteen to sixty, or longer,

if capable of service, is at the disposal of the State. In Cochin China Proper, or the hereditary dominions of the reigning family, every third man borne on the rolls performs actual service during three years, at the termination of which he is permitted to return to his family, and remain with them for a like period. In Tonquin, a conquered country, and subject to almost yearly insurrections, the conscription is, from necessity, less rigorous, and every seventh man only is called upon to serve.

The conscripts are denominated soldiers, and wear a military uniform, every one being duly enrolled in a battalion or regiment; but the services they are called upon to perform are far from being exclusively of a military nature. They serve alike as soldiers and as sailors, are employed in rowing the King's galleys, in navigating the vessels which convey the tributes and taxes to the capital, as artificers in the arsenal, and as labourers in the construction of roads, canals, bridges, and public edifices. They are also constantly employed as domestics and menial servants to the public officers. One of the French gentlemen excused himself one day from visiting us, according to appointment, by stating that he had no soldiers at hand to carry his palanquin. Such a system inevitably makes bad soldiers, as well as bad labourers, artificers, and domestics.

The following is the actual state of the military force of Cochin China. The royal guard consists of thirty thousand men, which is always stationed near the person of the King. The ordinary force is of two descriptions. The first consists of forty regiments, divided into five columns, called the centre, the van, the right, the left, and the rear columns. Each of these is composed of eight regiments, and each regiment of ten companies of sixty men each; so that a regiment consists of six hundred men, and the column of four thousand eight hundred. A superior Mandarin commands the column, and each regiment has a colonel, a lieutenant-colonel, ten captains, and ten lieutenants, besides a proper proportion of non-commissioned officers. To each regiment is attached a number of war-elephants, which varies according to circumstances. The whole of the elephants belonging to the Government are estimated at eight hundred, of which one hundred and thirty are always stationed at the capital. The second description of force is somewhat differently organized. This consists of five legions, each of five regiments, similar to the former. To these is to be added the provincial force, which varies according to the extent of each province. In the viceroyalty of Saigun, for example, there are sixteen regiments. There is no cavalry in the Cochin Chinese army, the puny horses of the country being unfit for this service.

The country, indeed, is little adapted to cavalry movements. A large part of the royal guard, and a still more considerable portion of the other description of troops, are constantly employed in various public labour independent of their military duties.

The marine of Cochin China consists of the inhabitants of the coasts formed into regiments, organized in the same manner as the infantry. One of these is stationed at each of the principal ports of the kingdom, and six at the capital. The war vessels consist of gun-boats, carrying from sixteen to twenty-two guns; of large galleys, of from fifty to seventy oars, carrying small cannon, or swivels, and on the prow one large gun, a twelve or twenty-four pounder; and of small galleys, of from forty to forty-four oars, carrying swivels only, with a large gun, a four or six-pounder, on the prow. The gun-boats amount to two hundred, the large galleys to one hundred, and the smaller to five hundred.

The late King of Cochin China, after the subjugation or submission of Tonquin, had, it is said, a standing force of one hundred and fifty thousand men, including his navy. When we were in Cochin China, the effective force had been greatly reduced; and the number of troops regularly clothed, armed, and disciplined, was stated as being no more than between forty and fifty thousand.

The pay of a common soldier in the Cochin

Chinese army is one quan a month, with a ration of forty-eight catties of rice; and the non-commissioned officers have ordinarily only the same allowances; but when on duty, an additional ration. The second-captain has a monthly pay of two quans and two measures of rice; the first-captain, three quans and three measures; and the colonel, eight quans and eight measures. The commander of a legion has thirty quans and thirty measures. The guards have a superior rate of pay. Long service and particular merit are very frequently rewarded by additional pay and allowances, without any corresponding promotion in rank. Thus, all who accompanied the late King to Siam enjoyed double pay; and those who joined him at Saigun, in the commencement of the struggle for his restoration, had their pay increased by one-half. The dead are more liberally provided for than the living. The Government pays six quans for the funeral expenses of a common soldier, one hundred and twenty quans for that of a colonel, and in the same proportion for the other ranks, besides supplying stated quantities of oil, wax, cloth, and other requisites of a Cochin Chinese interment.

The dress is the most liberal part of the military organization. The most essential portion of it consists of a loose convenient frock of strong English scarlet broadcloth, which reaches down to the knee. The head-dress is a small conical cap of basket-work, lackered over, ornamented at the

peak with a plume of cocks' feathers, and tied under the chin. This article is certainly neither becoming nor convenient. The dress of the lower part of the body consists of a pair of loose drawers, reaching a little below the knee. The legs and feet are entirely naked. The officers wear no uniform, but are clad in the ordinary dress of the country; consisting of loose silk robes, trowsers, and turbans. The soldier's dress is renewed once a-year.

The troops are armed with muskets and bayonets, or with spears; the two descriptions of arm being intermixed in the ranks in regular proportions. We repeatedly examined the muskets, and found them in very good order. They are taken great care of, and when the soldier is off duty always covered up. The exercise and evolutions taught to the troops consist of a few simple manœuvres, on the principles of European tactics. The discipline observed is strict, and offences, and even errors, are punished both summarily and severely.

By the rules of the conscription, a death, desertion, or promotion, must be made good by the village which furnished the original conscript. The officers may be considered as the only standing and permanent portion of the army; for the soldiers, from the moment they receive leave of absence, cease to draw pay and rations, and their place is filled up by the new conscripts.

The Cochin Chinese soldiers are, from all accounts, docile and obedient; and, though short of stature, strong, active, and capable of enduring hardship. Disciplined like our Sepoys, led by European officers, and serving a Government under which they would be treated with fairness and justice, I should think them capable of making very good troops; but at present, personal courage is not a virtue to be expected from them. In fact, I am led to believe, from all I saw, that although the discipline of the Cochin Chinese army may render it, in the hands of the Sovereign, a powerful instrument of oppression towards his subjects, or even of aggression against his smaller native neighbours, it would prove no defence at all against the invasion of an European power. On the contrary, I make little doubt, but that Cochin China, with its European fortresses, and its army disciplined on the European model, would fall an easier prey to the attack of an European power, than any other considerable kingdom of Asia, and this for reasons which will appear sufficiently obvious. The subjugated countries of Kamboja and Tonquin lie at the two extremities of the empire, and being discontented, are peculiarly liable to insurrection. All the strong-holds and arsenals, including the capital, lie close to the coast, and are either accessible to a fleet, or liable to be taken by a *coup-de-main*. They could not, at all events, resist the

science and courage of an European force for any length of time; and their fall, which would leave the government without resource, would be really equivalent to the conquest of the kingdom. There are other circumstances which would contribute to facilitate this event. The central part of the kingdom depends for food and other supplies upon Tonquin and Kamboja, which are almost exclusively conveyed by sea. These supplies would be readily cut off by a fleet; for these two countries, but especially Kamboja, could be most effectually blockaded by a very trifling naval force; while the least support given to the inhabitants of either would drive them into insurrection against the Cochin Chinese Government. Mr. Chapman, who saw the Cochin Chinese during the distractions of a long civil war, was of opinion, that, by taking side with one of the contending factions, a force of fifty European infantry, half the number of artillery, and two hundred Sepoys, would be adequate to the conquest of the kingdom. Matters are certainly different at present; but still I make little doubt, but that a force of five thousand European troops, and a squadron of a few sloops of war, would be quite sufficient for the conquest, and even for the permanent maintenance, of the whole empire.

Were Cochin China and the countries dependent upon it placed under the skilful rule of an European Government, according to the scheme

which the French appear to have had in view, I am led to think, judging from the docile character of the people, the fertility and resources of many parts of the kingdom, the numerous fine harbours belonging to other parts, and the centrical and favourable position of the whole, that in time a power might be established in that country, more troublesome and dangerous to our Indian commerce and empire, than it is easy to imagine could arise in any other situation, or under any other circumstances.

The revenue and resources of the Government are derived from a capitation-tax, a land-tax, corvées, contributions, and imposts on foreign trade. Every male who has attained the age of nineteen, pays annually a capitation-tax of one quan and one-tenth; the quan going into the public treasury, and the fraction being a perquisite for the collector. The land of Cochin China is of two descriptions—private property and crown-lands, by far the greater amount being of the latter description. The crown-lands are described as being farmed out to the villages. The impost is levied on each measure of thirty-six French toises square. To each conscript there is assigned one measure of land, and to the widow of a soldier a smaller quantity. The remaining land pays in kind about two quintals of clean rice for each measure of thirty-six toises, as above-mentioned. Private lands pay for each measure one quan and one-

tenth, which is distributed in the same manner as the capitation-tax. As to the corvées, the canals, roads, and other similar public works, are all effected through the labour of the villagers, with such occasional assistance as may be rendered by the soldiery. Every individual in the service of the State, civil or military, is exempted from the corvées, and from all direct imposts whatsoever. The rest of the male inhabitants, including all persons of the age of nineteen and upwards, are regularly enrolled, and subject to taxation. The capitation and land-tax are collected by the chiefs of villages, who pay them to the governor of the province, from whom they find their way to the King's treasury and granaries. Payments are enforced by imprisonment and confiscation, but the collection is in general said to be made without trouble or vexation, the peasantry being well acquainted with the nature and amount of the contributions. This fact, if well authenticated, proves that taxation is not excessive or arbitrary.

The contributions and monopolies of the Cochin Chinese Government, are of far less amount and consequence than those of Siam. They consist of certain descriptions of cinnamon, of cardamums, eagle-wood, and other trifling articles. The nature of the imposts upon foreign trade will be fully explained in the account given of the commerce of the country.

Of the total amount of the revenue of the king-

dom I could obtain no statement; but it is reasonable to believe, that in a country the institutions of which strike at once at the very sources of production, they must be comparatively very trifling. The King's actual treasure, however, is said to be large. One of the French officers, through whom I had my information, stated, that the present King one day informed him, that he had just received the report of his treasurer, and that there were thirty thousand bars of gold in the public coffers. Each of the bars in question is reckoned to be worth about two hundred and thirty-eight Spanish dollars, which therefore make the value of the whole 7,140,000 dollars. If the silver money bear any proportion to the gold, the King of Cochin China's hoarded wealth must be considered as very large for an Indian prince. Considering the rapacity of the Government, the exact habits of business which prevail in all its departments, and its extraordinary parsimony, I am inclined to consider the statement now given as probably not exaggerated.

On the system of jurisprudence in force amongst the Cochin Chinese and Tonquinese, we had no opportunity of making any exact observations; but the laws in general are sufficiently known to be those of China, executed in a manner less skilful, and in a spirit more harsh and arbitrary. Corporal correction by the bamboo and the wooden

ruff are the most common punishments; and judging from our own short experience, it is impossible to conceive them more frequent in any country. From the parental character which is affected throughout all the institutions of the country, every superior appears to be vested with a judicial authority to correct his inferior by corporal punishment. Fathers and mothers punish their children, of all ages, with the bamboo; husbands punish their wives; the petty officers punish the soldiers for the most trifling offences, and are punished in their turn by the superior officers. Capital punishment, besides higher offences, is inflicted for robbery, adultery, and occasionally for malversation and corruption: the two last, notwithstanding, are among the most frequent offences in Cochin China.*

* "The police is exercised by the chiefs of villages. They can also impose a slight fine, inflict a few strokes of the ratan, and even in certain cases condemn to the *canque*, or wooden collar. Severity is almost inevitable in the midst of so numerous a population. Should the person convicted consider himself unjustly condemned, he can appeal from the jurisdiction of the village chief to that of the chief of the Huyen, and from this again to the governor of the province. When the penalty is small, the judgment of the governor is final; but in all affairs of consequence, whether civil or criminal, an ultimate appeal is open to the royal council. It can scarcely fail, but that an affair brought before this last tribunal, especially if the accusation be of a capital nature, should be judged with the utmost impartiality. The eyes of the master are too near at hand. Besides, the most scrupulous precautions are taken, in order that the life of the accused may not be exposed to danger through the ignorance

Coming from countries like Hindostan and Siam, where systematic and national forms of worship are established, and where religion exerts so powerful a sway over society, we were surprised

or prejudices of his judges. The documentary evidence is reviewed with the most strict attention; the witnesses are heard anew; all is weighed and discussed gravely and deliberately. In fine, at the moment of pronouncing sentence, the judges are forbid to communicate; each considers the case by himself, and signs and seals his vote. These votes, placed on the Council Board, without being opened, are jointly put under the seal of the council, and carried into the interior of the palace, where the King takes cognizance of the affair. Should the votes be equal, the process is commenced anew. If the party accused is found to be innocent, the Emperor directs the accuser, or first judges, to be punished, according to circumstances. In the event of all the members of the council voting for a capital punishment, the King either orders execution, or occasionally directs a new trial. It is a maxim of the reigning prince, (Gialong,) that no precautions are too great when life is concerned. The chiefs of villages, of Tous and Huyens, receive the requests and petitions of the persons under their authority, and the governors of provinces give an audience each day, but without presents you can obtain no answer; so that the governors make rapid fortunes. In Cochin China, the laws make no distinction between native and stranger; and the latter can travel, buy, and sell, in the interior, provided he be furnished with a passport from the Minister of Strangers; for which he pays nothing, although it be customary to offer this chief a trifling present. In travelling through the country, a prudent stranger has nothing to fear; but he must not be surprised to find the people somewhat diffident, for the Cochin Chinese are naturally timid. Yet, are not prejudices arising from the same cause general everywhere? If you are a Frenchman, and they know it, every door will be forthwith opened to you."—*MS. of M. Chaigneau.*

at the contrast which Cochin China presented in this respect. In Cochin China and Tonquin, as in China, there is abundance of absurd and harmless superstitious practices; but apparently no real devotion,—no enthusiasm, and no fixed dogmas to which the people are wedded. The ministers of religion, instead of being honoured, reverenced, and powerful, as in Buddhist and Brahminical countries, are few in number, of the meanest orders, and little respected. They seem, in short, to be looked upon as little better than a kind of fortune-tellers. Numerous petty temples and other places of worship are to be seen, to which solitary votaries repair for the purpose of offering sacrifices, as may suit their convenience; but there exist no spacious temples where the people assemble to perform their devotions in common, or to receive religious or moral instruction.

As far as I could learn, the temples of the Cochin Chinese are dedicated to inferior supernatural beings; some of them tutelary, and others malignant; and the sacrifices which are performed in them consisting in burning bits of gilded paper, lighting incense rods, and presenting votive offerings of a few trifling articles, are intended to propitiate those beings, or to solicit their intercession and good offices in the temporal concerns of the votary.

The only part of the religious belief of the

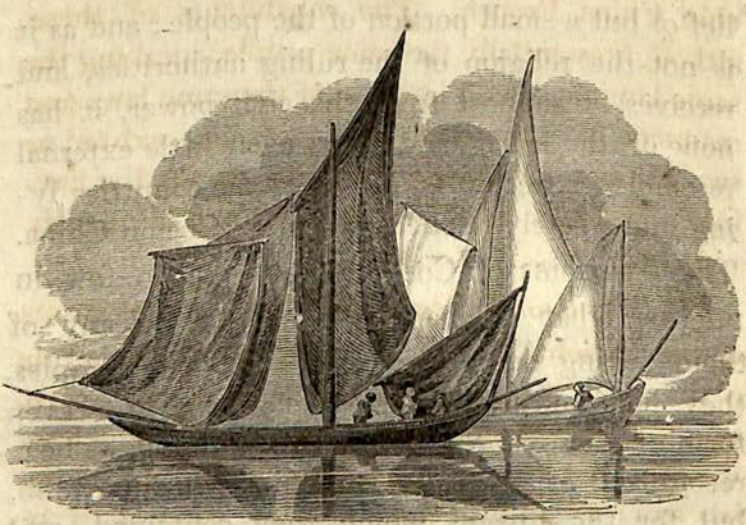
Cochin Chinese and Tonquinese which assumes a systematic form, or appears to reach the heart, or materially to affect the character and conduct of the people, is the worship of the manes of progenitors. This universally obtains; it is enforced by the Government not only as a religious, but as a moral and civil duty; and the honours paid to the dead appear to be considered equally necessary to their comfort and repose, as to the temporal prosperity, of the living.

I speak here of the religion which is the prevailing one amongst the Cochin Chinese, and which I presume to be the same, without material difference, with that which also prevails in China; from whence, no doubt, it has been borrowed.*

* "The religion of Cochin China is, with little difference, the same as that of China. The lower orders, the women, the ignorant, follow the worship of Buddha; while persons of rank, and men of letters, are of the sect of Confucius. The temples, dedicated both to the religion of Fo and Confucius, are remarkable for their simplicity; and no form of worship in Cochin China is distinguished either for the splendour of its temples, or the pomp of its ceremonies. The opinions, the prejudices, the superstitions of the Chinese, are to be found amongst the Cochin Chinese. This resemblance, their laws digested in Chinese, the books of the learned written in the same tongue, all reveal to us by whom it was that Cochin China was first civilized. Marriages, funeral ceremonies, the worship of ancestors, festivals and æras, are all, with slight deviations, the same as in China. The language differs, but the character is the same; so that a native of Hué and of Pekin, unable to understand each other in speaking, shall be forthwith intelligible in writing."—*Manuscript of M. Chaigneau.*

IDOL AND PAINTING IN A TEMPLE OF GUATAMA, OR FO, AT FAIFO.

With respect to the religion of Buddha, or Fo, as far as I could discover, it appears to be the belief of but a small portion of the people; and as it is not the religion of the ruling authorities, and receives no support from the civil power, it has none of the spirit, and bears even little external resemblance to the Buddhism of the countries lying immediately to the westward of Cochin China. The Talapoins of Cochin China are so few in number, that we happened not to see any of them during our stay; and as to the temples, they had neither the size, splendour, nor even form of those of Siam, and might not have been recognized as places of Buddhist worship at all, but for the images which they contained, and which were too characteristic to be mistaken. The worship of Fo is said to have been introduced into Cochin China and Tonquin, in the year of Christ 540, through China; but neither with respect to this circumstance, nor the peculiarities which distinguish it from the Buddhism of Siam, Ava, Ceylon, or Hindostan, could we procure any detailed information.



Cochin Chinese boats in the Bay of Turan.

CHAPTER VII.

Cochin Chinese History.—Commerce, Weights, and Monies.—Regulations of Trade.—Population.—Marriage and Condition of the Sex.—Wages of Labour.—Checks to Population.—Estimate of its Numerical Amount.

RESPECTING the history of the countries which constitute the present dominions of Cochin China, I have but few new facts to offer, and shall therefore confine myself to a very brief sketch. The Cochin Chinese dominions, although inhabited by many different races, contain only two considerable nations,—the Annam and the Kambojan.

The first, by far the most numerous, powerful, and perhaps civilized, occupy Tonquin and Cochin China Proper. The inhabitants of these, although essentially the same people, speaking the same language, and possessing the same laws and manners, have generally in former ages existed as two distinct and even hostile nations, the last having sometimes been a real, but more frequently a nominal, vassal of the first.

The annals of China contain the only accounts of the ancient history of Annam.* According to these, as they are rendered to us by European writers, Annam was conquered by China two hundred and fourteen years before the Christian æra; when numerous Chinese colonists were planted among its barbarous inhabitants, who disseminated amongst them the language, laws, and opinions of China. Amidst the uncertainty which characterises the whole annals of this people, one thing seems quite clear,—that they have always been an ill-governed nation; a fact which is shown by their frequent revolts against the Chinese,

* The annals of Tonquin embraces a period of about four thousand seven hundred years, of which about two thousand are utterly fabulous, and much of the remainder doubtful and unsatisfactory. We have a list of kings from the year 940 of the Christian æra to the year 1820, with the duration of each reign; the average giving only between thirteen and fourteen years,—a striking proof of the anarchy and disorder to which the country must have been subjected. The number of dynasties in the period in question was no less than seven.

their constant insurrections against their native princes, and the innumerable revolutions which have taken place in their government. China does not appear to have long maintained its first acquired dominion over Annam. In the year 263 of Christ, Cochin China regained its independence, but paid tribute to China. At a long interval from this period, the following facts have been recorded. In 1280, the Tartar sovereigns of China made an ineffectual attempt to conquer Annam. In 1406, the Chinese, taking advantage of the internal disorders of the country of Tonquin, again occupied it; but, after an ineffectual attempt at a permanent conquest, abandoned it in 1428, obtaining from the native sovereign an acknowledgment of vassalage. In 1471, Tonquin made a complete conquest of Cochin China. In 1540, another revolution in Tonquin once more brought on the interference of the Chinese, when the Tonquinese consented that their kingdom should be reduced to the condition of a Lordship of China, paying tribute every three years. In 1553, Cochin China threw off the yoke of Tonquin, and regained its independence. It was at this period that the successful encroachments of a minister, or general, brought about in Tonquin a form of government like that which has long existed in Japan and in the Maratta Empire; the government of a nominal and of a real sovereign: the first called *Dova*, or *Boua*, the descendant of

the ancient kings, but without any authority; and the second denominated *Chua*, or *Choua*, the hereditary descendant of a successful usurper, exercising the whole powers of administration. This form of government continued down to the year 1748, when the Boua, or nominal Sovereign, regained his authority.

From this last period, both Tonquin and Cochin China were in a state of constant anarchy, down to the revolution which broke out in 1774, and which eventually established the present order of things in both countries. Of this event the following is a brief narrative. A discontented party in Cochin China called in to their assistance a Tonquinese army, Cochin China being then a nominal tributary of Tonquin; so that, in the beginning of the struggle, the Tonquinese, who were in the sequel subdued, appeared as assailants and invaders. The great agents in the revolution, however, were three brothers, commonly known in the country by the name of the Taysons.* These persons, of whom the eldest and youngest were persons of great intrepidity, were of the lowest condition. The eldest, as I was confidently informed, was by trade a blacksmith; and the two youngest, common peasants and cultivators. Some acts of extortion, on the part of the

* The word may be translated "mountaineers of the west;" the native country of the insurgents being the mountains of the province of Quinhone, lying west of the capital.

officers of Government, in the district of which they were inhabitants, drove them to the profession of robbers; in which their success, joined to the general anarchy which prevailed, encouraged them ultimately to raise the standard of rebellion. Nhac, frequently called by Europeans Ignack, the elder of the insurgent brothers, defeated an army sent against him. The King of Cochin China himself, after attempting to negotiate with the insurgents, was defeated, at the head of a second army. His necessities then compelled him to deliver himself up to the conqueror, and he was never more heard of. His son advanced with an army to his rescue, but was defeated, taken prisoner, and beheaded. The Princess, his wife, who was with the army, however, effected her escape, carrying with her her second son, who afterwards, under the name of Gia-long, became King of Cochin China and Tonquin, and established the present empire.

The young Prince, fortunately for his own interests, placed himself under the direction of the Bishop of Adran; a Catholic missionary of the Franciscan order exercising his vocations in Cochin China. The real name of this individual, who is stated to have been a person of good education, and was, at all events, unquestionably a man of talent and resource, was Georges Pierre Joseph Pigneaux de Behaim, Bishop of Adran. This eminent individual was stated to me, by some

of his European associates in Cochin China, to be a native of Brussels; but in the "Nouvelles Lettres Édifiantes," he is stated to have been a Frenchman, born at Auragrey, in the diocess of Laon.

In the year 1778, about the period of these events, Mr. Hastings, the Governor-General of British India, deputed Mr. Chapman on a mission to Cochin China, with a view of establishing commercial relations between that country and the British possessions. The British agent found the province of Dong-nai, comprehending Saigun and Lower Cochin China, in possession of the royal party, which, indeed, never seems altogether to have lost its authority in this part of the kingdom. Quin-hone and the central portion were in the occupation of Nhac, with the exception of the capital Hué and the country lying north of it, which had been seized by the Tonquinese. Mr. Chapman gives a frightful picture of the condition to which the country was reduced by the civil war,—stating, among other facts, that the famine was so great in some situations, that the people were driven for subsistence to feed on unwholesome sea-weeds, and that in the market of Hué human flesh was exposed for sale. This last circumstance was also asserted to me, while in Cochin China, to have taken place frequently in the course of the war.

In 1781, the King of Cochin China, having collected a small force, chiefly consisting of Portu-

guese, made an attack on the fleet of Nhàc, but was defeated, and upon this occasion forced to quit the kingdom. He took shelter, with a few of his followers, in one of the islands on the east coast of the Gulf of Siam. This, as I was informed in Siam, was not the small and desert island of Pulo We, as some European writers have written, or Pulo Ubi, as others have supposed, but the more extensive and commodious one of Phu-kok, or Qua-drol, at which we ourselves touched on our way to that country. From this retreat he proceeded to Bangkok, with a view of claiming the assistance of the Siamese sovereign, to aid in his restoration. Here he continued to reside for several years, and with a small band of his countrymen assisted the Siamese in the wars which at the time raged between them and the Burmans. The King of Siam promised the aid required, but never gave effectual assistance; and the few troops which he did send, by their habits of rapine proved more prejudicial to their ally than to the enemy. The Siamese, however, in conversation with me, claimed a large share of the credit of restoring him to his throne. A misunderstanding took place between the two kings, arising out of mutual dissatisfaction. The Siamese monarch, already married to a niece of the exile King, demanded another relation of the Prince as a concubine. The demand was refused; and the

King of Cochin China, thinking himself no longer safe at Bangkok, secretly effected his escape in the night, and once more repaired to the island of Qua-drol. Notwithstanding this quarrel, upon the restoration of the Cochin Chinese monarch, a friendly intercourse took place, and was kept up between them during the rest of their lives.

But, in reality, the Cochin Chinese monarch was less indebted to himself, his subjects, or the Siamese, for his restoration, than to the courage and sagacity of the Bishop of Adran, and the skill and courage of the few European adventurers whom he brought along with him. In 1787, the King, having confided his eldest son to the Bishop's care, authorized him to proceed to France, and claim the assistance of Louis the Sixteenth. The Bishop and the young Prince proceeded accordingly, and having safely arrived, the Court of Versailles entered heartily into the views of the King of Cochin China, and the treaty, offensive and defensive, was soon entered into, the substance of which is already before the public.* France was to have furnished to Cochin China twenty ships of war, five regiments composed of Europeans, and two of Asiatic troops, and to pay a million of dollars, half in specie and half in warlike stores. The King of Cochin China, on his part, ceded to France the Peninsula

* It will be found in Mr. Barrow's lively and agreeable narrative of his voyage to Cochin China.

of Han, the Bay of Turan, and the adjacent islands; a narrow and sterile territory, about forty miles in length, and nowhere exceeding six or eight in breadth. He engaged to furnish France with sixty thousand men, if attacked within her new acquisition, and to permit her to levy to the extent of forty thousand men, to enable her to carry on her wars in other parts of India. Favourable terms to the commerce of France were also conceded.

In the meanwhile the usurpers were not idle. The younger brother, called Long-nhung, and who eventually took the royal title of Quang-trung, the most able and adventurous of the three brothers, made himself master of all Central and Northern Cochin China; and, taking advantage of a civil war in Tonquin, pushed his arms into that country in 1788, conquered it, and declared himself King. The King of Tonquin fled to China, and solicited the assistance of the Emperor, who, in 1789, sent an army, said to amount to forty thousand men, to restore his vassal to his throne. Quang-trung, who after his conquest had retired to Cochin China, hearing of this event, returned by forced marches to Tonquin, encountered the Chinese army—routed and nearly destroyed it—and regained peaceable possession of the country. This is an achievement of which, although accomplished by a rebel, the Cochin Chinese are still vain.

The only results of the specious prospects held

out by the treaty with France were a few French officers, whom the Bishop of Adran and the young Prince brought with them from France when they returned to Cochin China in the year 1790. Had the treaty been carried into effect to the full extent of the views of the French Court, it is certain that Cochin China and the surrounding countries would virtually have become provinces of France in the first instance, and that in the sequel Great Britain would have interfered—probably supported the Taysons, and thus have established her influence, if not her dominion, in that remote part of India.

It was a fortunate accident for the King of Cochin China that the treaty was not carried into effect. Meanwhile the European adventurers, who resorted to his standard in consequence of the alliance, and who, including French, English, and Irish, never exceeded fourteen or fifteen individuals, were adequate to ensure his success, without endangering his independence. With the assistance of these persons, among whom there were naval and military officers, and engineers, he set about forming a navy, disciplining troops, and constructing fortifications after the European manner. His army and navy thus formed, although small in number, were soon an overmatch for the rude tactics of his adversaries. He commenced his operations at Saigun, which for many years continued the seat of Government. Here he built a strong

fortress after the European model. In time he built others, and constructed arsenals at Gnathang, and at Quin-hone. Notwithstanding all the advantages which he possessed, it yet required a period of twelve years to exterminate the power of the Taysons. Quin-hone, the capital of Nhac, was attacked and taken in 1796; Hué, the capital of the third brother, who died in 1792, and whose son had succeeded him, was not taken until 1801; and Tonquin was not subdued until 1802. From these facts, it may be strongly suspected, that the bulk of the people were by no means so anxious for the restoration of the legitimate King, as the European eulogists of Gia-long have represented, nor the government of the Taysons so odious and unpopular. I was, in fact, assured by Chinese merchants with whom I conversed at Hué, and who had lived in the country during the rule of both, that the Taysons governed the country with more equity and moderation than either the present King or his father; and it is by no means improbable, indeed, that the Cochin Chinese have gained very little by the restoration of a family, whose acknowledged misgovernment drove them to rebellion, and who may be considered to have recovered, and maintained its authority by means foreign to the genius of Asiatic Governments.

It was not until the year 1809, that the King of Cochin China, taking advantage of the dissensions which prevailed in Kamboja, partly by force

of arms, but chiefly by intrigue, annexed to his already extensive dominions the most valuable portion of that country.

Gia-long died in the year 1819, at the age of sixty-three. His merits have probably been greatly overrated, but he was undoubtedly a person of talent, courage, perseverance, method, and intelligence. His great merit consisted in the good sense with which he submitted to, and profited by, the lessons and instructions of his European officers, and the tact and discrimination with which he availed himself of their skill and knowledge. Through their means he acquired an useful and even extraordinary acquaintance both with naval and military tactics, and the art of fortification; and thus he was enabled to organize a more regular and effective military power than probably was ever before formed in India, with such slender assistance from European civilization and science. But his talents were far better suited to reconquer a kingdom than to govern it. His views were all selfish, narrow, and despotical; and the Government which he has established is, in fact, a military despotism of the most oppressive description. Some of the French officers, who had been admitted into his confidence, and even familiarity, informed me, that they had often ventured to recommend to him the encouragement of industry within his dominions, but that his constant reply was, that he did not want rich subjects, as poor

ones were more obedient. They urged that in Europe disorders and insurrection were most frequent among poor and needy nations. The brief answer to this was, that the matter was different in Cochin China. Of this prince some traits of generosity are recorded while he was yet struggling for his throne; but as soon as his authority was fully established, he committed acts of ferocity and revenge equal to any on the records of Eastern tyranny. He caused the bodies of the Taysons to be disinterred, decapitated, and otherwise brutally insulted. Their whole families were put to death by being trod upon by elephants, while their members were exposed in chains, or scattered over the country. I was assured that even women and children were not spared on this occasion; and that of the former, several in a state of pregnancy were crushed to death by the elephants.

Gia-long had but one legitimate son, the prince who accompanied the Bishop of Adran to France in 1787, and who died in 1799, at the age of twenty-two; a decided convert to the Christian religion,—much to the grief of his father. This prince had evinced no talent or energy of character, and left no legitimate issue. The crown, by the will of Gia-long, devolved to his present Majesty, an illegitimate son. This prince, who took the name of Meng-meng, was thirty-two years of age at the period of our visit. In personal appearance, he was represented to us as being rather

DEPUTY GOVERNOR OF KAMBOJA,

IN HIS DRESS OF CEREMONY.

KING OF COCHINCHINA,

IN HIS DRESS OF CEREMONY.

short of stature, possessing an ordinary Cochin Chinese physiognomy, and marked by the small pox. According to Cochin Chinese notions, he is well-educated; that is to say, he has a considerable acquaintance with the written language of China, and with the laws, religion, usages, and etiquette of that empire, which are viewed as models by the Cochin Chinese and Tonquinese. His succession to the throne took place without bloodshed or opposition; and it is stated that he behaves towards his relatives not only with forbearance, but with generosity. None of them are immured, according to the custom of other Eastern countries; and even the pensions paid to them by his father, which, in accordance with the parsimonious habits of that prince, were upon a very wretched scale, have been augmented by him. His Majesty proceeded in 1821 to Tonquin, for the purpose of meeting a Chinese deputy from the Court of Pekin, and there he received a regular investiture of the Governments of Tonquin and Cochin China from the hands of that officer, as a lieutenant or viceroy of the Emperor. In the performance of the ceremony, from his servile partiality to Chinese manners, he submitted to the Imperial deputy's taking rank of him—a concession which the more manly and independent spirit of his father had always refused; and owing to which, he was never regularly invested, according to ancient usage.

The foreign trade of the Cochin Chinese Empire is greatly inferior to that of Siam. The principal places from which it is conducted are Saigun, Kang-kao or Hatian, and Saigun in Kamboja, Ya-trang, Phu-yen, Quin-hone, Fai-fo and Hué, in Cochin China, and Cachao in Tonquin. The domestic traffic is chiefly carried on by the great rivers of Kamboja and Tonquin, or by the sea-coast. By this last channel, the capital is supplied with necessaries—rice, salt, oil, iron, &c. I was assured that not less than two thousand junks were engaged in this traffic between Saigun and Hué, including those employed in carrying the Government contributions. These commonly measure from thirty to forty-five tons, and, by the goodness of their construction and management, are enabled, taking advantage of the land and sea-breezes, to perform the voyage against the monsoons, notwithstanding their severity on this coast. The trade between the capital and Tonquin is partly conducted along the coast, and partly by internal communication. By the latter course, goods are conveyed for one hundred and eighty miles by natural canals, or salt lagunes, which run close to the sea-side. The trade by sea in this quarter is conducted in native vessels of from fifty to seventy-five tons, which can perform three voyages a-year. These amount to about sixty, and the trade both ways

is almost exclusively in the hands of the Chinese residents.

The foreign trade of Cochin China is carried on with China, Siam, and the British ports within the Straits of Malacca. Its intercourse by land is chiefly between Tonquin and the three neighbouring provinces of China, Yu-nan, Quang-si, and Quan-tong. In this branch the raw produce of Tonquin is exchanged for the manufactures of China, and even for Bengal opium, and a few British woollens. All the ports of Cochin China above enumerated trade more or less with China; but the principal part of the traffic is with Saigun and Cachao. The Chinese ports with which the intercourse is held are five places of the province of Quan-tong; viz. Canton, Chu-chao, Nomhong, Wai-chao, and Su-heng, as well as the various ports of the dependent island of Hai-nan, the port of Amoy, or Emui in Fokien, Limpo, or Ning-po in Chekiang, and Saocheu in Kiang-nan. The amount of the Chinese trade of Saigun yearly has been commonly as follows:—from fifteen to twenty-five junks of Hai-nan, measuring from 2000 to 2500 piculs each; two junks of Canton, one measuring five, and the other 8000 piculs; one junk of Amoy, measuring 7000 piculs; and six junks of Saocheu, measuring from 6 to 7000 piculs each. The total number of junks may be reckoned at about thirty, and their total burthen about six thousand five hundred tons. The most

valuable cargoes are imported from Amoy, consisting principally of wrought silks and teas; and the least valuable, from Hai-nan. The Canton junks, before a direct intercourse was established between the British possessions and Cochin China, used to import all the opium consumed in the country, and the whole of the broadcloths and other woollens with which the King's troops were clothed, and they still continue to import a considerable quantity of both. The exports by these vessels are generally of the same description as from Siam, and the principal of them are cardamums, the areca-nut, sugar, fancy woods, eagle-wood, ebony, cotton, rice, stic-lac, ivory, peltry, hides, and horns, deers' sinews, ornamental feathers, particularly those of a species of king-fisher, &c. &c.

The Chinese trade of Fai-fo is with the same ports, and may be taken annually at the following amounts:—with Hai-nan, three junks, measuring about 2500 piculs each; with Canton, six junks, averaging 3000 each; with Amoy, four junks, averaging also 3000 each; and with Saocheu, three junks, of about 2500 piculs each. This gives about sixteen junks, giving a total burthen of near 3000 tons. The small size of these vessels is accounted for by the shallowness of the river, or rather creek, of Fai-fo, which they must enter for shelter.

The trade of Hué, the capital, is also with the same ports, and amounts in all to about twelve

junks, measuring from 2500 to 4000 piculs each, and to near 2500 tons. None above 3000 piculs can load with safety in the river, and those of larger size take in their cargoes in the Bay of Turan. The exports from Huè and Fai-fo are the same, and the principal articles consist of sugar, cotton, and cinnamon.

The Chinese trade of Tonquin by sea commonly consists of the following number of junks: —eighteen from Hai-nan; of 2000 piculs each; six from Canton, from 2000 to 2500; seven from Amoy, of the same burthen as the last; and seven from Saocheu, averaging 2500 each. This gives a total of thirty-eight junks, and a tonnage of about 5000 tons. By the statement of the Chinese traders, it appears that a junk of 3000 piculs, or about one hundred and eighty-seven tons, is the largest which can enter the river of Tonquin with safety. The exports consist of areca-nut, cardamums, cotton, salt-fish, salt, rice, varnish, stic-lac, and a variety of other dyeing drugs with gold and silver bullion.

The Chinese trade with the minor ports of Cochin China amounts, in all, to about twenty junks not measuring above 2000 piculs each; and therefore giving a total tonnage of 2300 tons. The usual exports are rice and cinnamon. The exportation of the first-named commodity being forbidden without a special licence, many of these junks do not enter the ports of Cochin China at

all, but, lying off the coast, smuggle their cargoes on board.

According to the statements now given, the whole of the junks employed in the trade with China amount to one hundred and sixteen, and their burthen to little short of 20,000 tons; which, however, is less than one-half the Chinese trade of Siam.

Between Siam and Cochin China there subsist both political and commercial relations. An interchange of complimentary embassies between the two Courts occurs almost yearly, and for a long time back there has been no rupture between them. Still, however, there is a good deal of jealousy, arising chiefly out of the question of the partition of Kamboja. The trade with Siam has already been described in speaking of that country, and is entirely conducted in vessels belonging to the port of Bangkok.

The trade with the British ports in the Straits of Malacca has chiefly originated since the establishment of the settlement of Singapore in 1819. On the average of the last few years, it may be estimated at about twenty-six junks,* averaging two thousand five hundred piculs each, which gives a total tonnage of somewhat more than four thousand tons. The importations in this trade consist

* This refers to the year 1824, since which time a very great augmentation has taken place, although I am unable to state its precise extent.

of rice, salt, sugar, raw silk, and some minor commodities; and the exports of opium, gambier, or catechu for the consumption of the Kambojans; iron, taken to Saigun only; fire-arms, with some British woollens, and white cotton goods. This branch, and every other of the foreign trade of Cochin China, is carried on by the Chinese, who are both the merchants, mariners, and navigators. The native Cochin Chinese scarcely venture beyond their own coasts, which, indeed, the state of their municipal laws renders impracticable. I know no exception to this, but the adventures to the Straits of Malacca, made within the last few years by the King of Cochin China, on his own account, and the junks employed in which, with the exception of the Chinese pilots, are all navigated by native Cochin Chinese.

The direct commercial intercourse between European nations and the Cochin Chinese Empire is extremely inconsiderable. The Portuguese, Dutch, French, and English, had each a considerable intercourse with Tonquin about the close of the seventeenth century, which ceased almost entirely about the middle of the eighteenth, chiefly owing to the unsettled state of that country, but in some respects also to the indiscretion of the traders themselves. The English and Dutch East India Companies had factories at Cachao, the capital; and their ships ascended to the town of Domea, twenty miles from

the sea, which was as far as the shallowness of the river would allow them. The European traders, at this period, imported saltpetre, sulphur, broadcloth, calicoes, (it may be presumed of Indian manufacture,) lead, cannon, with pepper and other spices. They exported raw silk, gauzes, grograms, *Gros de Naples*, and other wrought silks, grass-cloths, manufactured articles of mother of pearl and lackered ware, fine mats, ebony, ivory, tortoise-shell, cinnamon, cotton, varnish, copper and calamine; which last, it appears, the Dutch carried in large quantities to Japan. With Cochin China Proper it does not appear that European nations ever held any commercial intercourse worth speaking of.

The first attempt made by our nation to renew an intercourse with the countries forming the present Cochin Chinese Empire was in the year 1778, when Mr. Hastings deputed thither Mr. Chapman. This gentleman, as before mentioned, found the country in a state the most unfavourable to the views entertained by the Indian Government; that is, it was engaged in a civil war, which did not terminate until twenty-four years thereafter. Another attempt at establishing an intercourse with Cochin China was made in 1804, under the government of the Marquis of Wellesley,) the principal object of which was the removal of the French party, which then existed in the country, and which was imagined to exercise

a degree of influence over the councils of the reigning prince, which it really never possessed. In fact, that prince had too much prudence and foresight to risk the safety of his own states, by embroiling himself in the quarrels of European nations. The Mission was undertaken under circumstances of great difficulty, and chiefly aiming at objects which were altogether unattainable,—the expulsion of the French—territorial acquisition—and the permanent residence of a British agent at the Court,—proved wholly abortive.

Soon after the settlement of Europe, in 1815, the French attempted to renew their intercourse with Cochin China; and several of their trading ships have since visited the country, but not with much success; and it is not improbable that this traffic will soon cease altogether, from the incapacity of the French nation to conduct so distant a trade, and one which derives no support or assistance from the vicinity of colonial establishments. In 1817, an attempt was made, on the part of the Court of France, to get the King of Cochin China to act upon the treaty of 1787, by sending a mission to him, the failure of which has been mentioned in another place.

The very centrical and convenient geographical situation of Cochin China, and the many fine harbours which render a resort to it so safe and easy, seem to point it out as well calculated to become the medium of extending the commercial inter-

course of European nations with the less social, but far more important, country of China. This is a subject of interest sufficient to deserve a few observations. The grounds of such an intercourse are already laid in the trade of the Chinese junks with Cochin China, and in the traffic recently established between the latter country and the British possessions in the Straits of Malacca. Through this channel, an intercourse might be opened with two of the richest provinces in China, Chekiang and Kiangnan, with which European nations at present hold no intercourse, even through native vessels; our only communication with them being indirectly through the port of Canton, where the restraints imposed upon our commerce are sufficiently known. The following goods were pointed out to me by the Chinese merchants, with whom I conversed in Cochin China, as either well suited for the consumption of that country itself, or for the market now alluded to, viz. raw cotton, tin, pepper, iron, lead, broadcloth, white calicoes, opium, saltpetre, and fire-arms, besides all the usual articles of Malayan production, such as camphor, sea-slug, esculent swallows' nests, &c. The returns which might be expected in a free-trade, would consist of the raw silk of Chekiang, the green teas and nankeens of Kiangnan; these being the two provinces which afford the greatest abundance of the articles in question, with black tea from the province of Fo-

kien, and the northern parts of that of Canton; the raw silk of Tonquin and Cochin China itself, together with silver bullion, sugar, and probably cinnamon. The freedom which has been established of late years in the silk trade in Great Britain, will tend greatly to the encouragement of such an intercourse; but the removal of the restraints upon the tea trade, would occasion a far more important extension of it. Even in the present state of this last branch of trade, I have seen considerable importations of coarse tea, such as would be extensively consumed by the lower orders in England, brought to Singapore from Saigun, and sold to a profit at the low prices of from threepence to sixpence a pound.

I shall conclude this sketch of the commerce of Cochin China, with some account of the weights and monies of the country, and the regulations of foreign trade, as established by an edict of the late King, Gialong, in 1818. The ordinary weights used by the Cochin Chinese are those of China;—the picul, consisting of 133⅓ lbs. avoirdupois, divided into a hundred parts, or catties. At Hué and Fai-fo, however, the picul used by the Chinese in their dealings consists of a hundred and twelve catties; and at Saigun, a picul of sugar is in reality a picul and a half, or a hundred and fifty catties. Rice is sold by the bag, which ought to consist of fifty catties; but in the market it is commonly two catties short of this

amount.—The proper coined money of Tonquin and Cochin China is called a *Sapek*, or *Sapeque*, and consisted formerly of brass, but at present of zinc. It is about the size of an English shilling, bears the King's name in the Chinese character, and has a square hole in the middle, for the convenience of being strung. Sixty *sapeks* make a *mas*, and ten *mas* one *kwan*, or *quan* as it has been more usually written. The two last are only monies of account. Six hundred *sapeks*, which make a *kwan*, are commonly strung upon a filament of ratan, and in this manner kept for use; forming a bulky and most inconvenient currency. Ingots of gold and silver, stamped by the Government, are current in the country, although not considered coin. One description of these, resembling in form a piece of Indian ink, is covered all over with Chinese characters, and considered equal to two kwans and eight mas. Fractions of it, in halves and quarters, are also to be seen. This ingot, having been carefully analyzed in the mint of Calcutta, was found to be of the standard of seventeen pennyweights and a half, and to contain 578.67 grains of pure silver, and therefore to be equal in value to 1.56 Spanish dollar, or 6*s*. 2½*d*. A larger ingot is also in common circulation, which, on trial at the Calcutta mint, was found to be of the same standard as the last, and to contain 6172.9 grains of pure silver; being equal, therefore, to 16.64 Spanish dollars,

or 3*l.* 6*s.* 5¼*d.* A gold ingot is coined, of the same weight as the small one of silver, and commonly estimated at seventeen times its value, or 26.52 Spanish dollars. The standard of this last has not been determined; but the gold is asserted to be of a very fine touch. The zinc coin, as well as the gold and silver ingots, are struck at Cachao, the capital of Tonquin. The punishment of death is inflicted for forging the former. The Spanish dollar is current in Cochin China, and valued at one quan and a half by the Government. The kwan of account, according to the statements now given, ought to be worth fifty-five cents, or something more than half a Spanish dollar; but its price fluctuates with the plenty or scarcity of silver, as may naturally be expected. The price paid by the King for the metal from which the zinc currency is struck, is only twelve quans the picul; so that, of course, it passes for infinitely more than its intrinsic value, and is therefore an object of considerable revenue.

The following are the port regulations. The principal impost is a duty on the measurement of the vessel, the amount of which varies at the different ports,—being lowest at the capital, and highest at Saigun. This absurd distinction is intended to counterbalance the natural disadvantages of the northern ports, and place them on an equality with the fine port of Saigun. The manner of rating the duty is this:—The vessel being

measured from stem to stern, excluding the overhanging part of the latter beyond the stern-post, the one-half of such measurement is considered the midships, where the breadth is taken within the bulwarks, and upon this the duty is levied, at so many kwans per Chinese cubit, equal to 16.2 English inches. At Saigun, the duty upon the junks of Canton, Fokien, and Chekiang, and upon the ships of European nations, are as follow:—Vessels measuring from fourteen to twenty-five cubits, pay one hundred and forty kwans per cubit; those from eleven to thirteen, ninety kwans; those from nine to ten, seventy kwans; and those from seven to eight, thirty-five kwans. At the ports of Turan and Fai-fo, the same description of vessels pay respectively in the following order:—one hundred and twelve kwans, seventy-two kwans, fifty-six kwans, and twenty-eight kwans. At the port of Hué, the rates for the same description of shipping are as follow: eighty-four kwans, fifty-four kwans, forty-two kwans, and twenty-one kwans.

The Chinese junks of Chaocheu are favourites, paying smaller duties than any others; while the small Chinese junks from Malayan ports, Siam, and the island of Hai-nan, are more heavily burthened than any other. I can only state the rate of duties on those at Saigun, where they are the highest. The first pay as follow:—those measuring from fourteen to twenty-five cubits, one

hundred and ten kwans per cubit; those from eleven to thirteen, seventy kwans; those from nine to ten, fifty kwans; and those from seven to eight, thirty kwans. The latter description pay,—those measuring from fourteen to twenty, one hundred and fifty kwans; from ten to thirteen, fifty-five kwans; and from seven to nine, twenty kwans.

Vessels entering a Cochin Chinese port for the purpose of refitting, or for refreshment, or to inquire for a market, pay no measurement duties; and a vessel paying the measurement duty at one port is exempt from it at every other for a whole year. No import duties are levied upon any article. An export duty of five per cent, is levied upon cardamums, pepper, cinnamon, ivory, rhinoceros' horns, esculent swallows' nests, sapan-wood, ebony, and red-wood. On timber for making coffins, (an important article of domestic traffic,) and wood suited for ship-building, with cordage, a duty of ten per cent. is levied. The exportation of the following articles is contraband:—the coin of the country, gold and silver bullion, copper, agila-wood, rice, and salt. The prohibition, however, as commonly happens in such cases, is rather nominal than real. The exportation of rice is allowed by licence, and, except in times of apprehended scarcity, is sent out of the country in abundance. The same observation applies to salt; and gold and silver are at all times exported without difficulty. To this list of prohibited articles, I ought

to add *men* and *women*, who are expressly named in the edict. The only article of which the *importation* is prohibited is opium; the sale of which, however, is readily effected through the usual dexterity of the Chinese. At the time of our visit, the annual importation was considered to be one hundred and fifty chests, viz:—forty for Kamboja, ten for the capital and neighbourhood, and one hundred for Tonquin.*

* "Trade is carried on almost entirely by the Chinese. Nothing equals the activity of this mercantile people. It is but very lately that the Cochin Chinese have been seen to attach themselves to this description of industry. We proceed to make known those objects of exportation and importation upon which the whole commerce of Cochin China depends. The exports are as follow:—*Cinnamon*, of several qualities: the first is sold dearer than its weight of gold.—*Pepper*. The culture has decreased in consequence of excessive imposts: the price is very variable.—*Areca*. The price has fallen in the proportion of from six to one, since the Malays have been encouraged to cultivate it for the English. Formerly the Portuguese were in the habit of taking away about nineteen ship-loads yearly. The present price is about two Spanish dollars the picul, of one hundred and twenty-five French pounds.—*Cotton* in very small quantity: the price about seven dollars the picul.—*Raw Silk*, according to quality, from three to four dollars the Cochin Chinese pound, of twenty French ounces.—*Sugar*. The price varies from three to four dollars the picul.—*Dye-woods*, at very low prices.—*Tonquinese varnish*—*Dried fish*. This is one of the most considerable objects of Chinese trade. I have seen it purchased in Lower Cochin China at two dollars the picul, and sold at Macao at twelve. *Ivory*.—This comes chiefly from Kamboja and Lao. The price is according to quality. Two teeth, weighing a picul, are worth forty Spanish dollars.—*Gamboge*. This comes from Kamboja, and varies in price from eighteen to forty dollars.—*Carda-*

A man marries in Cochin China as early as he can afford to purchase a wife, for such is the universal practice. The price is paid to the bride's parents, and among the more indigent is often as low as from ten to twenty, kwans. From forty to fifty, however, is a more frequent price; which rises to one and two hundred, among persons of better condition. Men among the lower classes seldom marry before twenty, and

mums, from the same country, vary in price, according to quality, from one hundred and fifty to two hundred dollars the picul. *Elephants* and *Rhinoceros' hides*, also from Kamboja. Their price is about five dollars the picul; and they are used by the Chinese for jellies and soups.—*Elephant* and *Buffalo* bones, objects commonly bartered for pottery.—*Siamese Cloths.* These are cotton fabrics manufactured by the wild people of the interior.—*Kamboja Cloths.* These are of silk, and exported in very small quantity.—The articles of importation are the following:—*Wrought Silks.* The Chinese import in the shape of satins, Pekins, and flowered stuffs, the raw silk which they had previously exported. —*Porcelain*—*Tea*—*Paper.* This last is either white for hangings, flowered, coloured, or gilt for funeral purposes.—*Dried fruit* and *Confectionary.* Among the Cochin Chinese, the taste for sweetmeats is general.—*Children's Toys.* The bones of the elephant and buffalo are brought back manufactured into these articles.

"It would be desirable to render an estimate of the value and quantity of the goods exported and imported; but the trade being free, and almost entirely in the hands of strangers; and the ships, besides being subjected to no duties except those upon anchorage, estimated by their dimensions, data are wanting for a calculation worthy of any credit. There enter the ports of Cochin China yearly about three hundred Chinese junks, great and small, varying in size from one hundred to six hundred tons."—*MS. of M. Chaigneau.*

this event is often delayed until thirty. The rich often marry as early as fifteen. The age of marriage with women of the lower orders, is from seventeen to twenty. These ages, it will be observed, are later than in most other Asiatic countries, and show that, in Cochin China, prudence, or at least necessity, has some influence in checking the increase of population. Polygamy is of course permitted to any extent; for, in Cochin China, marriage is a state of mere convenience to the men, and the wife or wives are little better than the chattels of the husband. The first espoused, being usually a person of equal or superior rank, is looked upon as the real wife; and the succeeding ones, persons of inferior condition, little better than her handmaids. A young woman cannot be married by her parents contrary to her inclination. Marriages are indissoluble, except by the mutual consent of the parties. Before marriage, the young Cochin Chinese women are allowed the most perfect liberty, or rather licence. A breach of the laws of chastity, on their part, is considered no offence; nor, it is said, even an obstacle to a matrimonial connexion. When an unmarried woman is discovered to be pregnant, the lover is inquired for, generally acknowledges himself, and marries her; getting her at a price under the common rate. Should her pregnancy prove a matter of inconvenience, the bring-

ing on of an abortion by secret means is not viewed among this gross people as criminal. Infanticide, however, so frequent among the teeming population of China, is scarcely known in Cochin China; and when it does occur, it is viewed as a crime. The matrimonial knot once tied, there is an end to the liberty of the female sex. By the laws of Cochin China, the punishment of adultery is death to both the offending parties; often, however, commuted into severe corporal punishment. This law shows that it is not the *moral offence*, but the *invasion of property*, which is the object of punishment. The Cochin Chinese women are not immured as in most countries of Western Asia; but they are not the more respected on this account; on the contrary, they are treated with rigour or neglect, as if it were not worth while watching them. A Cochin Chinese husband may by law inflict upon his wife the severest corporal punishment, short of life, without being called to any account. We were ourselves witnesses to several specimens of this discipline. While our ship lay at the village of Candyu, one of our gentlemen saw a very decided case of this nature, in the person of a young woman of twenty-four or twenty-five years of age. She was thrown down upon her face in the usual manner, and a man and woman held her, while a brute of the male sex, believed to be her husband,

inflicted at least fifty blows of a ratan. The punishment took place in the open street, and excited very little notice among the people.

The wages of a day-labourer at Hué are considered to be one mas a-day with food, or two without it. Taking the average price of rice at two quans, or one Spanish dollar and ten cents per picul, a day-labourer will earn three piculs a-month; and as he consumes only a cattie and a half a day, his wages are equal to nine times his consumption of corn. The real value of his food however, of all descriptions, appears to be reckoned at one and a half dollar a-month; so that there remains an equal sum in money, or a picul and a half of rice, to supply food and lodging, and to maintain such part of his family as is unable to work. The quantity of corn which the wages of a day-labourer in the town of Calcutta can purchase, is very little more than one-half of this amount; but then he is free to labour on his own account as many days in the year as he thinks proper. So high a rate of wages is no doubt occasioned by the military conscription, which, engaging one-third of the able-bodied labourers of the kingdom in the unprofitable service of the State, impairs the industrious habits of the whole. This institution, if a great proportion of fertile land did not exist, and if the toil of cultivating it were not thrown upon the women, would proba-

bly have produced a high price of corn, and this would not only have arrested the increase of population, but even caused it to retrograde. The women in Cochin China perform a large share of such labour as, in other countries, belongs to the male sex only. They plough, harrow, reap, carry heavy burdens, are shopkeepers, brokers, and money-changers. In most of these cases, they are considered not only more expert and intelligent than the men, but what is more extraordinary, and what I have never heard of in any other country, their labour is generally of equal value; so that, in fact, here there is no distinction in amount between male and female labour, as in other parts of the world; the wasteful idleness of the public service depreciating the first, and habits of industry raising the last to an unnatural equality with it. The observation in Cochin China is, indeed, frequently made, that the labour of the women supports the men; who, on their side, compelled to toil for the King, have no leisure to attend to their own affairs, and probably very little capacity. Under such circumstances, it is hardly to be supposed that Cochin Chinese husbands are likely to be much loved or respected. The women are therefore alleged to prefer strangers to them, and especially the Chinese; who, as their industry is not shackled by the conscription, or the corvées, exact no heavy labour from them,

but, on the contrary, indulge them in comparative idleness, and even treat them with more respect and kindness than their own countrymen.

There is no country in Asia in which the scourge of intestine war, with the famine, disease, and misery which accompany it, has produced greater devastation than in Kamboja, Cochin China, and Tonquin, the principal members of the present Empire of Cochin China. The last civil war lasted twenty-eight years, and was conducted with great ferocity on both sides. The cultivation of the country was suspended, and the intercourse between one province and another was interrupted; so that the least fertile, which had depended in all times upon the most productive for food, were literally starved. Mr. Chapman, who was an eye-witness, draws a frightful picture of the condition to which the country was reduced in the early period of this struggle.* The king-

* He describes his first intercourse with the natives at Cape St. James's as follows:—"When we reached the beach, I sent the linguists on shore, keeping every body else in the boat; after some time they came back, leading two or three of the most miserable-looking objects I ever beheld, upon the very point of perishing with hunger and disease. The linguists telling us we might land in safety, we did so. These poor wretches told me they belonged to a village hard by, in which were left about fifty more, much in the same condition with themselves; that a fleet of Ignaacks, in its way to Donai, which it was now blockading, had two months before paid them a visit, and plundered them of the scanty remains left by a horrid famine, supposed in the preceding year to have carried off more than one-half of

dom may now be said to have enjoyed an uninterrupted tranquillity since the year 1802; and it may be presumed, that its population, in that time, must have increased very considerably. The climate is generally salubrious, even for strangers, and in time of tranquillity the country does not appear to be liable to famines or destructive epidemics. Under all the disadvantages of bad government, the effectual price of labour is comparatively high and fertile, and unoccupied land is still abundant. The price of rice does not fluctuate remarkably in ordinary seasons. At Saigun, such as is consumed by the lower orders may be stated as seldom falling under a quan and a half the Chinese picul, (82½ cents of a Spanish

the whole inhabitants of Cochin China; and that they had nothing to eat now but a root thrown up by the surf on the beach, which caused them to break out in blotches all over their bodies; it was shaped something like a sweet potatoe, but longer. I was now no longer at a loss to account for the indifference the wretches I saw at Tringano showed to my offer of procuring their release; they were not possessed of sufficient patriotism to prefer liberty, with so scanty a fare in their own country, to slavery, with a full belly, in a foreign one. There is no slavery in Cochin China. On perceiving the mouths of two or three rivers to the north-west, and asking their names, they told me that one of them led to Donai. Several more of these objects were now gathering round me: distressed at this scene of misery, not in my power to relieve, I hastened on board my boat, and took with me an old man, who appeared the most intelligent, to inform our mandarin of all he knew, and to determine what was next to be done."—*Account of a Mission from the Governor-general of India to the King of Cochin China.*

dollar,) nor rising beyond two quans (100 cents). At Hué, it may be given at from two to three quans the picul. In reference to this subject, the pernicious practice, on the part of the Government, of hoarding enormous quantities of grain as provision against scarcity, but, in fact, as a remedy against insurrection, ought not to be passed over. Immense granaries of corn, belonging to the Government, are to be found in all parts of the kingdom, from which, out of its assumed parental tenderness, food is dispensed to the people, when hunger and its own misgovernment bring them to the brink of rebellion. This practice, well calculated to maintain the despotism of the sovereign, effectually destroys a free trade in corn, and is without doubt one great cause of those scarcities for which it pretends to be a remedy. The legal prohibition to export rice to foreign countries, and the actual difficulty of exporting it, except clandestinely, or through favour, contribute too obviously to the same effect.

In Kamboja and Cochin China Proper, we scarcely saw a beggar during our short stay. This however, I was informed by Chinese who had visited Tonquin, is far from being the case in that country, where mendicity is said to be very prevalent, while population, in the vicinity of the capital at least, presses against the means of subsistence in a manner very different from what obtains in those parts of the country which we

visited. The oppressive character of the Cochin Chinese Government, however, produces another race of vagrants, more pernicious to society—a crowd of public robbers. These are most frequent in Kamboja and Tonquin. One of the French gentlemen mentioned, as a proof of the vigorous administration of Thao Kun, the present Governor of Kamboja, that the number of capital trials, for some time before he received charge of the government of Kamboja, used to be about three hundred a-year, and that he had reduced it to three or four. This alteration was not effected by any improvement in the administration, or by the redress of existing grievances, but by severe examples and frequent executions, such as I have referred to in my JOURNAL.* The Cochin Chinese scarcely ever emigrate; and this fact may, to a certain extent, be adduced as proof that the population does not press upon the means of subsistence. It is true that the rigorous laws against emigration, and the veneration which the Cochin Chinese entertain for the tombs of their fathers, contribute greatly to keep them at home. These causes, however, would have been ineffectual, had food been high-priced and

* This chief is, I believe, the individual referred to by M. De La Bissachère in the following description:—"Aujourd'hui, il n'y a plus qu'un eunuque qui soit général; c'est un homme d'une grande capacité, reconnu par tous les généraux comme le plus habile d'entre eux, et chéri et vénéré du peuple, à raison de ses grands talens et de sa *grande humanité*."

the wages of labour low, as may be seen from the example of China; from whence, notwithstanding the existence of similar laws and superstitions, a greater swarm of emigrants is annually poured out than from any other country in Asia.

With respect to the actual population of the Cochin Chinese Empire, the only statements before the public that I am aware of, are those of M. De La Bissachère, published in his Present State of Tonquin and Cochin China, in 1812. He estimates the whole population to amount to about twenty-three millions, but the details which he offers give only about twenty-two. These are; eighteen millions for Tonquin, a million and a half for Cochin China, a million for Kamboja, and from one million two hundred thousand to one million four hundred thousand for the inferior sub-divisions of the empire. Considering the semi-barbarous condition of the people, the badness of the government, the want of industry, and the large proportion of the territory, which is admitted to be either sterile or unreclaimed and unoccupied, it is impossible to believe, that this is other than a very exaggerated statement. If the territory of Cochin China contain, as I have supposed, an area of ninety-eight thousand miles, the above conjecture will give two hundred and thirty-four inhabitants to each square mile, which is a greater density of population than exists in some of the most industrious and best governed coun-

tries in Europe. In the manuscript of M. Chaigneau, the whole population is estimated at from fifteen to twenty millions, giving an average of seventeen millions and a half, which is five millions and a half less than the estimate of M. De La Bissachère. Even this would give a population of one hundred and seventy-eight to the square mile, which is undoubtedly overrating it prodigiously. M. Vanier, a highly respectable officer in the service of the King of Cochin China, stated to me in conversation, that he did not believe the population of the whole empire exceeded ten millions. In truth, little better than probable conjecture can be hazarded upon the subject. Rolls of the population are kept by the Government for fiscal and military purposes, including, however, only the male adult inhabitants; but these have never been seen, even by the European officers in the King's service. One of the latter informed me that the whole number of persons borne on the rolls of the military conscription amounted only to two hundred and forty thousand; but that it was generally believed that one-third of those liable to the conscription were omitted through favour or partiality. This would bring the whole number up to three hundred and twenty thousand, to which should be added the numerous train of officers, civil and military, of all ranks, in the public service, with foreign settlers of all descriptions. Reckoning the whole

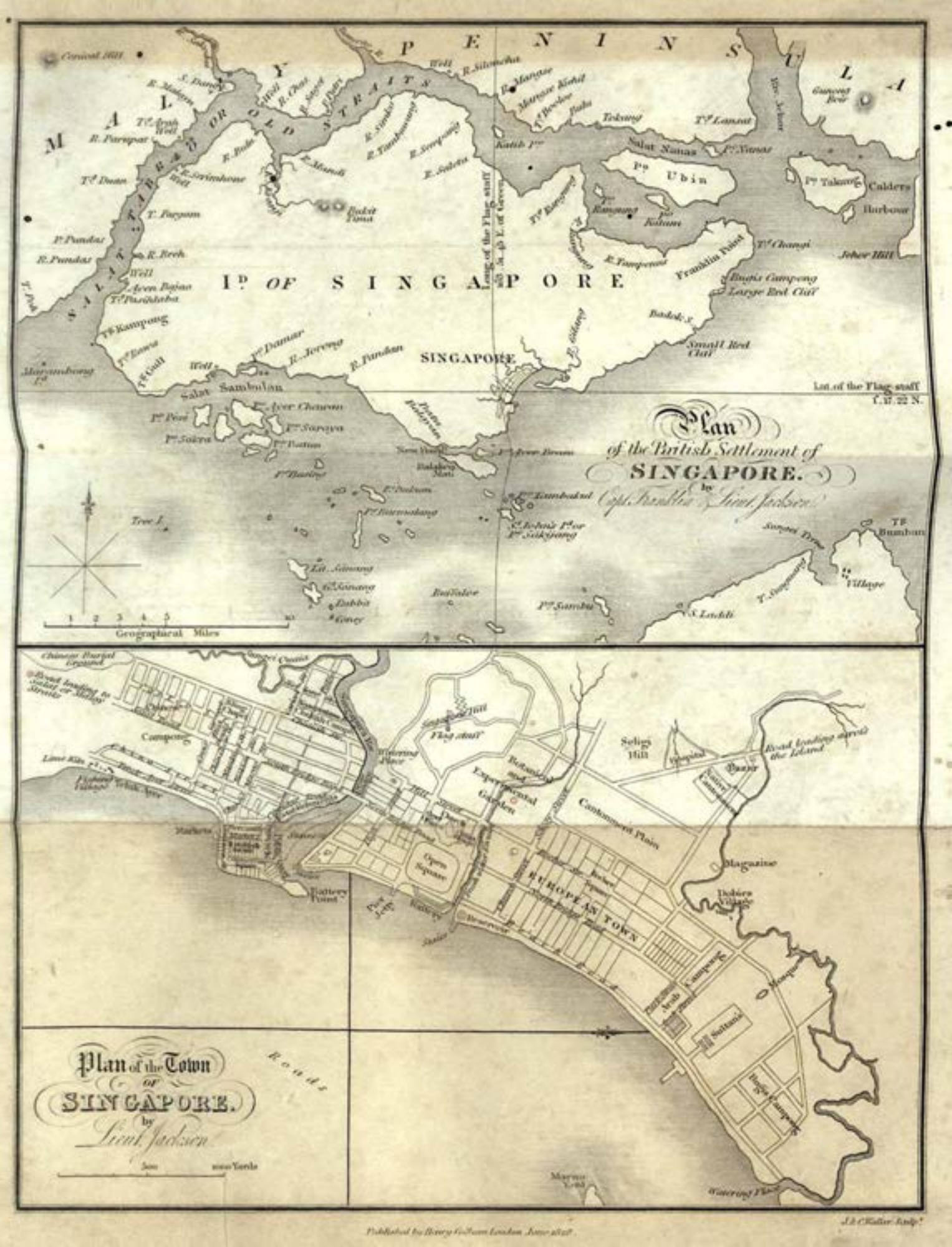
adult male inhabitants, above eighteen years of age, at one-fourth of the whole, the total population of the empire will amount to no more than one million two hundred and eighty thousand. This however, I have no doubt, is on the other hand greatly underrating it. Perhaps the safest estimate may be drawn from comparing the amount of the population of Cochin China with that of countries similarly circumstanced in regard to government, climate, and locality, and where an actual census has been taken. The neighbouring country of China is at present considered to contain one hundred and fifty millions of inhabitants; and, according to the map of the Jesuits, contains in round numbers, exclusive of Tartary, one million three hundred and ten thousand square miles, which area gives one hundred and fourteen souls to a square mile.* Were the Cochin Chinese Empire as densely peopled, which is very improbable, it would still contain only a population of eleven millions one hundred and seventy-two thousand, or about one-half that ascribed to it by M. De La Bissachère. Parts of Tonquin are admitted, on all hands, to be very densely peopled; but the reverse is the case with Cochin China and the greater portion of Kamboja.

* This, it may be remarked, gives nearly the same density of population as the British possessions in India; so that it is probable we have been in the habit of overrating the population of China, or its general fertility is less than has been imagined.

If we compare the population of the Cochin Chinese Empire, therefore, with that of two of the contiguous provinces of China, viz. Canton, and Yu-nan,—the one populous and fertile, and the other mountainous and thinly peopled,—we shall, perhaps, obtain a nearer approximation to the truth, than by any other process of estimating it. These two provinces of China, according to the map constructed by the Jesuits, contain jointly, in round numbers, an area of one hundred and sixty-five thousand square miles, and a population of eight millions eight hundred and seventy-six thousand three hundred and ninety-nine, of which Yu-nan, with a superficies of above one hundred thousand square miles, has little more than two millions. This gives only a population of fifty-three to the square mile. Assuming these data for the Cochin Chinese Empire, its population will be only five millions one hundred and ninety-four thousand; and I think, under all circumstances, this is more likely to be an over than an underrated estimate.*

* "The population of Cochin China is immense, especially along the rivers. That of all the empire amounts to from fifteen to twenty millions. Polygamy is allowed; but notwithstanding, a man has in fact but one wife; his other women are but concubines, real servants, of whom the labour and the fruitfulness constitute the wealth of the master. But there are other causes, physical and moral, of which the influence contributes perhaps more to the excessive population of Cochin China. The climate is generally salubrious, with the exception of some lands sub-

ject to inundation, where fevers sometimes prevail. The diet consists of rice and fish. The low price of food is the cause that no one fears to become a father, since there is a certainty of being able to support the most numerous offspring. A Cochin Chinese scarcely ever emigrates. In fine, honour itself attaches to the paternal relation. In the eyes of his children, a father is sovereign during his life, and they make him almost a god after his death."—*Manuscript of M. Chaigneau.* Upon this statement I cannot help remarking, that the very facts adduced by the writer, afford themselves conclusive evidence that Cochin China is not a densely but an under-peopled country.


P E N I N S U L A
M A L A Y
Id. OF S I N G A P O R E
SINGAPORE
Salat Nanas
Pg Ubin
Salat Sambulan
Franklin Point
Johor Hill
Calders
Barbour
Plan
of the British Settlement of
SINGAPORE.
by
Capt. Franklin & Lieut. Jackson
Geographical Miles
Plan of the Town
OF
SINGAPORE.
by
Lieut. Jackson
EUROPEAN TOWN
Campong
Malacca
Selegi Hill
Flag staff
Battery Point
Roads
Published by Henry Colburn London June 1828.
J.B. Walker Sculp.

CHAPTER VIII.

Island of Singapore.—Geographical description and physical aspect.—Natural productions.—Climate.—Agriculture.—Manufactures.—Trade.—Population.—Wages and profits.—Description of the town.—Markets.—Administration.—Civil and military establishments.—Revenue.—History of the settlement.

HAVING not only seen a good deal of the new and interesting settlement of Singapore, during the voyage of which I am now rendering the narrative, but having afterwards been charged with its local administration for a period of near three years, my reader will reasonably expect that I should render some account of it: I shall therefore devote this separate chapter to the subject.

The Island of Singapore, of an elliptical form, is about twenty-seven miles in its greatest length, and fifteen in its greatest breadth, containing an estimated area of about two hundred and seventy square miles. The whole British settlement, however, embraces a circumference of about one hundred miles; in which is included about fifty desert islets, and the seas and straits within ten miles of the coast of the principal island. Singapore is separated from the mainland by the old strait of

its own name, which is of small breadth throughout, and scarcely a quarter of a mile wide in its narrowest part. Fronting the island, on its southern side, and at the distance of about nine miles, is an extensive chain of islands, all desert, or at least inhabited only by a few wild races, of which nothing is known but their bare existence. The intervening channel is the high road of commerce between the eastern and western portions of maritime Asia,—the safest and most convenient track being so near to Singapore, that ships in passing and repassing go very nearly through the roads.

The aspect of Singapore presents, in general, an undulating surface; the highest hills not exceeding two hundred feet in height, and the generality not being of half this elevation. The site and neighbourhood of the settlement are composed of red sandstone, with occasional beds of shale, cellular clay iron ore, jaspery iron ore, and conglomerate. The northern and eastern portions of the island, however, which are adjacent to the continent, are composed of granite. With the exception of iron, no metals have been discovered; but it is highly probable that tin exists here, in common with the neighbouring countries.

The rivers of Singapore are not numerous, and those which exist are mere brooks. Their absence, however, is compensated by the frequent salt creeks which indent its coasts, and in several cases penetrate the island to the extent of three, and even of

five and six miles. It is upon the banks of one of these, navigable for the largest cargo-boats, that the commercial part of the town is so conveniently situated.

The exceptions were so trifling when we first occupied it, that the whole island may be described as having been covered with one universal and mighty forest. The trees of which this consists are various, and many of them as yet undescribed by botanists. Amidst this variety, those fit for economical purposes do not exceed five or six in number. Of these the timber is strong and durable, and, if not fit for the purposes of naval architecture, well adapted for every object of house-building.

The wild quadrupeds found in the island may be shortly enumerated. There are numerous monkeys of several species; bats, among which are the vespertilio and galiopithecus; several species of the viverra; a newly described animal, which has been named Ictides; an otter; two species of cat, one of which is new; several species of squirrel, including the sciurus volucella, which is fully as large as the domestic cat; the porcupine, the common rat, the sloth, *(bradypus didactylus,)* the pangolin, the hog, two species of deer, viz. the moschus pegmæus, a little delicate creature, smaller than an English hare, without horns, and frequent in many countries of tropical India, and the Indian roe *(cervus munjac)*. To this imperfect list may be added, since it is ruminant and mammiferous,

the dugong, correctly written duyung. This remarkable animal, of which the flesh is esculent, and not unlike young cow-beef, is not unfrequently caught at Singapore, and I have seen it of the weight of three hundred pounds. It is remarkable, that the larger quadrupeds found on the neighbouring continent are absent not only in Singapore, but in all the islands of the same or smaller extent,—such as the elephant, the rhinoceros, the tapir, the tiger, and the leopard.

The variety of the feathered tribe in Singapore is very considerable; and Mons. Diard, a skilful naturalist, who paid much attention to the subject, informed me, that in a period of three months, he had discovered more new species here than in as many years over the wide extent of Cochin China and Kamboja. Birds of prey are very few in number; there are not, that I am aware of, either eagles or vultures; and a few crows only made their first appearance some months after the formation of the European settlement. Gallinaceous birds are still rarer, if indeed there exist any at all. This is the more remarkable, since on the neighbouring continent they are numerous, there existing there two species of peacock, at least three species of pheasant, including the magnificent argus pheasant, the wild cock, and three species of partridge. Web-footed birds are rare in Singapore: of the genus anas there is but one species, the whistling teal of India. The birds of

passage of this family, which are numerous beyond the tropics, are never to be seen at Singapore or the neighbouring countries. The most numerous orders of birds are those of the passeres, the climbers and wader; but especially the first, which are remarkable alike for their novelty and beauty.

Reptiles are exceedingly numerous; among which are tortoises, *sauriens*, and serpents. Of the last, I collected, during my stay, not less than forty species, six of which, including two species of hooded snake, were venomous. Notwithstanding, however, accidents from the bites of snakes rarely occur. I do not indeed remember hearing of a single example.

In a place little more than eighty miles from the Equator there is of course very little variety in the seasons. The greatest quantity of rain falls in December and January; but refreshing showers are experienced throughout the year. In 1820, rain fell on two hundred and twenty-nine days; in 1821, on two hundred and three days; in 1824, on one hundred and thirty-six days; and in 1825, on one hundred and seventy-one days; giving an average, on four years, of about one hundred and eighty-five rainy, and one hundred and eight dry days. The rainy months are the coldest, namely, December and January; and the dryest months, April and May, the hottest. My friend, Captain Davies, the Military Staff Officer at Singapore, kept, for a period of near eight years, a register of

the weather; of which I give the following abstract for the year 1825, as sufficient for the present purpose.

ABSTRACT FOR 1825.	THERMOMETER.									Dry Days.	Rainy Days.
	MONTHLY AVERAGE.			GREATEST RANGE.			LOWEST RANGE.				
	6 o'clock, Morning.	12 o'clock, Noon.	6 o'clock, Evening.	6 o'clock, Morning.	12 o'clock, Noon.	6 o'clock, Evening.	6 o'clock, Morning.	12 o'clock, Noon.	6 o'clock, Evening.		
January	75,1	80,9	79,9	77	86	83	72	75	74	13	18
February	76,0	86,2	79,8	79	87	85	77	82	78	17	11
March	76,5	84,6	83,6	80	88	86	73	76	79	20	11
April	77,8	84,6	83,7	81	87	87	74	80	79	27	13
May	77,6	84,7	83,7	81	87	86	75	78	80	15	16
June	79,9	84,3	84,1	84	88	87	75	77	77	19	11
July	76,6	82,9	82,6	82	88	85	73	78	77	18	13
August	76,5	82,2	81,4	81	87	85	75	78	78	14	17
September	77,1	83,3	80,6	82	87	85	74	76	77	19	11
October	76,8	83,6	83,5	79	88	86	75	76	79	19	12
November	76,6	84,3	82,9	79	86	89	71	80	79	16	14
December	75,7	81,7	80,8	78	85	86	77	77	77	17	14
									Total, Wet and Dry days	194	171

It will be seen from this table, that the lowest range of the thermometer, within the year, is 71°, and the highest 89°. The climate is hot, but equable. From the absence of distinct seasons, it is necessarily monotonous.

The site of the town is remarkable for its salubrity, and the fevers and dysenteries of ordinary tropical countries are of very rare occurrence. I have no recollection, indeed, of any European having fallen a victim to the climate in the long period of nine years, since the formation of the settlement. This may appear at first view the more remarkable, since a considerable portion of the site of the town, and much of the neighbourhood, is a low and even noisome marsh. The healthiness of the situation is, I conceive, chiefly ascribable to the free ventilation which prevails, and which precludes the formation of those poisonous miasmata, which are the true source of most endemical diseases in warm countries. Sea-breezes prevail with considerable regularity, but chilling land-winds are scarcely known—probably another reason for the salubrity of the place. In the north-east monsoon, from October to March, the settlement is refreshed by stiff breezes blowing in from the China Seas. The westerly monsoon, interrupted by the Straits of Malacca and the neighbouring lands, is not felt. That the free ventilation of the town now mentioned is the chief cause of its salubrity, may be inferred from

this, that the climate is not equally good in the only other part of the island where a considerable population is collected. This is the beautiful and romantic spot called "the new harbour," which is landlocked, and where fevers and dysenteries of a fatal character are sufficiently frequent among the Malay settlers who occupy it.

The surface of the island consists for the most part, as already mentioned, of a succession of low hills, the summits of which are barren; but on their slopes, and in the intervening valleys, there is occasionally a good deal of soil of considerable fertility. In a few situations on the north coast there are sandy plains of some extent, where the soil, however, is so scanty, that nothing will grow in them except weeds; and tall trees, under present circumstances, as useless.

The soil, like that of all the neighbouring islands, is, upon the whole, decidedly sterile, and, generally speaking, unfit for the growth of corn, as well as of almost all the great staples of tropical husbandry. The growth of coffee has been attempted upon a small scale, but without success. A few clove and nutmeg-trees have also been planted; and the last, under the judicious care of my intelligent friend, Dr. Montgomerie, the Superintendent of the Botanical Garden, have already yielded fruit; but it may be safely predicted that the soil is not suited to the growth of either. Even pepper, which has been more ex-

tensively cultivated, does not seem to succeed. The only object of successful and extensive culture is the species of *uncaria*, which yields the *gambier*, or terra japonica, a hardy product for which the soil of Singapore, as well as that of all the neighbouring larger islands, seems peculiarly suited. The Dutch settlement of Rhio, one of these, is the source of the greater portion of this article, which is consumed by the islanders of the Archipelago. The plant is a hardy native *scandent* shrub, rising to the height of three or four feet, which comes to maturity in twelve months. It is very productive of drug, each plant being reckoned to afford yearly between five and six pounds. The catechu, or terra japonica, is obtained by simply boiling the leaves, inspiriting the juice, and adding to it, to give it tenacity, a little crude sago. The culture and manufacture may be carried on at the low rate of about three Spanish dollars per picul, of 133⅓ lbs. avoirdupois. The quantity produced in Singapore is as yet inconsiderable; but the neighbouring settlement of Rhio is said to produce above four thousand tons of the commodity yearly.

The soil and climate of Singapore are perfectly well adapted to the production of tropical fruits, —such as the cocoa-nut, the orange, the mangoe, which is found wild in the forests; the mangostin, duku, pine-apple, &c. &c. The produce however at present is quite inadequate to the demand, and

large quantities are imported from the vicinity. Besides fruits, the soil is also well adapted to the growth of all those green esculent plants and farinaceous roots which are natural to a tropical climate,—such as different varieties of cucumber, the egg plant, different pulses, the yam, the batata, and many others. The common garden pea of Europe may probably be raised with care; but it will be in vain that we attempt the culture of the cabbage, cauliflower, artichoke, or potato. These are not raised in Java, Cuba, St. Domingo, or Jamaica, at a less elevation than three thousand feet above the level of the sea; and in Singapore, so much nearer the Equator, their successful culture would probably require four thousand.

The agricultural capabilities of Singapore, distinct from soil, are not inconsiderable. The alterations of season are so trifling, that there is a perpetual succession of flowers and fruits; and every period of the year, therefore, seems almost equally suited for conducting the labours of agriculture. The climate is at the same time free from storms and hurricanes, or even violent gusts of wind, calculated to overthrow or impede the labours of the husbandman. The place is also secure, as far as I have been able to ascertain, from the depredation of locusts, palmer worms, Hessian flies, and similar insects, which prove so ruinous in other warm climates. The absence of

the elephant and tiger are also very favourable circumstances. These immunities may, in a more advanced state of the settlement, give encouragement to many branches of husbandry, upon which it would be difficult at present to speculate. Before quitting this subject, I ought to observe, that the agriculture of Singapore, of whatever description, is almost exclusively carried on by the Chinese.

The manufactures carried on in Singapore, however trifling, deserve some notice. The most considerable is that of pearl or white sago. The raw sago is imported, as mentioned in another place, from the north coast of Sumatra. The process of converting it into pearl sago is sufficiently simple, and consists in nothing more than frequent edulcorations, drying the farina, granulating it in sieves, and finally drying, or rather baking it by a slow fire, in iron pots. The sago thus treated is at first of a pure white colour, and has all the look of new-fallen sleet, but in time it becomes more or less discoloured according to the degree of skill with which the process has been performed. The manufacturers are all Chinese, and a manufactory employing about a dozen labourers will produce at the rate of five piculs per diem. The cost of production is reckoned at about five Spanish dollars per picul, equal to about a farthing per pound. The art of manufacturing pearl sago is a recent one, and invented by the Chinese. It was first

practised at Malacca about fourteen years ago, and introduced into Singapore only in 1824. This last place is now the principal seat of manufactory.

Ship-building has not hitherto been carried to any extent, but two establishments exist, capable of giving ordinary repairs to vessels of any size, and at which a few small craft, constructed of the timber of the island, have been built. This timber however, as already mentioned, is not fit for building durable ships. Should at any period the abundant supply of teak timber produced in Siam become available, it may be expected, as there are many situations convenient for the formation of docks and slips, that the business of ship-building will be established at Singapore upon an extensive scale. The only other manufactory which may be worth noticing is the fabrication of native arms, and of domestic and agricultural implements for exportation throughout the Archipelago. In 1825, there were upward of sixty forges employed by the Chinese chiefly in this business.

The chief importance of Singapore is as a commercial emporium, and in this view it has certainly answered the most sanguine expectations. When it was founded, in 1819, it was inhabited by a few hundred piratical Malay fishermen. Down to the year 1819, both the island and the harbour may be said to have been almost unknown. It was indeed not only not frequented

by European shipping, but carefully avoided. In 1820, the very year following its occupation, not less than 13,000 tons of native vessels cleared out from the port, all employed in one description of trade or another; and no less than 55,000 tons of European shipping touched at it, either for trade or refreshment. For the first three years of its occupation, no attempt was made at an estimate of the amount of the trade carried on. I made an effort to remedy this defect in 1823, when the exports were found to amount to 5,568,560 Spanish dollars. In the subsequent years, the account of the trade was taken more in detail, and as the absence of all duties and charges left few motives for concealment, the results are perhaps as accurate as the greater number of regular custom-house returns. The following is an abstract of the trade of the place for the years 1824, 25, and 26:

	IMPORTS. Span. dollars.	EXPORTS. Span. dollars.	Total.
1824	6,914,536	6,604,601	13,519,137
1825	6,289,396	5,837,370	12,126,766
1826	6,863,581	6,422,845	13,286,426

It appears from this statement, that in the years 1825 and 1826, so calamitous to the general commerce of the world, the value of the trade of Singapore, before so rapidly progressive, suffered some slight diminution. On inspecting the re-

turns, however, it appears that the real quantity of goods, imported and exported, had considerably increased, and that the diminution in amount arose from depreciation.

There is no Asiatic and few European ports of which the trade is so diversified as that of Singapore. The following are the branches into which it may be naturally divided: The trade with Great Britain and the continent of Europe, with the British and other European possessions on the continent of India, with Malacca and Prince of Wales's Island, with New South Wales, with the Mauritius, with the Dutch possessions in the Archipelago, with the Spanish possessions in the same or Philippines, with South America, with China in European vessels and Chinese junks, with Cochin China and Kamboja, with Siam, with the Bugis nations, with Borneo, and with Sumatra and the Malay peninsula. Of each of these I shall give a succinct account.

The first direct arrival from England to Singapore was in the year 1821; in 1822, four ship cleared out with cargoes for the European market; in 1823, nine; in 1824, twelve; in 1825, fifteen; and in 1826, fourteen ships. The greater number of these were bound for London and Liverpool, but there were some also for Stockholm, Hamburgh, and Bordeaux. The staple imports of this branch are cotton goods, woollens, iron, and spelter. The exports are very various, and

may be enumerated as follow: ore of antimony, aniseed, aniseed oil, benjamin, camphor, cassia, cassia-buds, coffee, cubebs, dragons' blood, elephants' teeth, gamboge, horns of cows, deer, and buffalo; hides of ditto, mother of pearl shells, musk, nankins, orpiment, pepper, Chinese paper, Chinese raw silk, Chinese wrought silk, ratans and canes; rhubarb, cloves, mace, and nutmegs; pearl sago, Siam sugar, Japan soy, tin, tortoise-shell, turmeric, gold and silver bullion, and sapan-wood. In 1824, and I have seen no later statement, the sworn value of these articles was 1,035,868 Spanish dollars.

In point of tonnage, by far the greatest branch of the commerce of Singapore is with the European possessions on the continent of India; but the greater number of the vessels which compose it, including the ships of the East India Company, merely touch at the port for refreshment on their route to and from China, South America, the Philippines, and Java. The most important part of this trade is the intercourse with Calcutta, which is upon an extensive scale. The chief exports thither are pepper, tin, ratans, sago, and sapan-wood, with gold and silver bullion. The imports are opium, Indian piece-goods, and canvass bags.

An intercourse of considerable consequence is carried on with New South Wales, chiefly through the convict ships, many of which, on their return

to England, touch at Singapore, and take full cargoes for the European market.

Ships from the Mauritius chiefly import into Singapore ebony, and lately cloves, both eventually for the Chinese market; and export the produce of the Islands and China, either for the immediate consumption of the Mauritius itself, or for re-exportation from thence.

The trade with the Dutch possessions ought to have constituted one of the most valuable branches of the commerce of Singapore, and would unquestionably have done so, to the mutual benefit of both parties, but for the anarchy which has prevailed for some years in the Dutch colonies, and the wanton and flagrant impolicy of the commercial regulation of the Netherland Government. In 1823, there cleared out from Singapore, for Java, twenty-nine square-rigged vessels; in 1824, only twenty-two; in 1825, only thirteen. In 1826, the trade appears to have revived, the number which cleared out appearing to have been thirty. In this traffic, the imports consist of Banca tin, coffee, and spices. Opium, and Indian piece-goods are exported.

The direct intercourse between Singapore and the Philippines commenced in 1824. The imports here are mother of pearl shells, sapan-wood, sugar, rice, oil, bullion, and some Chinese goods; and the chief exports, British and Indian piece-goods, woollens, and metals.

The trade carried on between Singapore and China, in European vessels, is very considerable. A few sail direct from Singapore to Canton; but in general the trade is conducted by English and Portuguese ships from Bengal and Bombay, especially by those from the former. Many of these take Malayan produce to China; and instead of returning, as formerly, lightly laden, bring on Chinese goods to be eventually sent to Europe by the direct traders for England. These goods chiefly consist of raw silk, cassia, camphor, and nankins. In this manner, the existence of Singapore contributes, in a small degree, towards mitigating the pernicious effects of the monopoly of the East India Company with the Chinese Empire.

A direct intercourse in Chinese vessels, between China and the British possessions, never took place until the formation of the settlement of Singapore. The most valuable, but not the largest, of the Chinese junks come from the port of Amoy, in the province of Fokien; the largest come from several ports of the continental portion of the province of Quantong;—such as Canton, Changlim, and Ampo; and the smallest and least valuable from the island of Hainan. In 1821, the number of large junks, excluding those of Hainan, was four; in 1822, five; in 1823, six; in 1824, seven; in 1825, seven also; and in 1826, ten. The articles imported by these are coarse earthenware, flooring-tiles, umbrellas, shoes, paper,

incense rods, dried fruits, confectionary, sugar-candy, medicines, nankins, gold threadlace, tea, and a great number of minor articles. The cargo of a Fokien junk is sometimes worth one hundred thousand Spanish dollars: that of a Canton junk will vary from twenty thousand to eighty thousand. The voyage from Canton is commonly performed in from ten to twelve days; and that from Fokien, in from twelve to fifteen. Owing to the directness of the course, and consequent facility of the navigation, very few of them are lost in this voyage: I can recollect but one instance. The exports consist of a great variety of articles, —such as the bark of two species of Rhizophora, or mangrove; a species of Alga, called by the Malay, Agar-agar, said to be used by the Chinese in their manufactories in room of gum; eagle-wood, ebony, and some ordinary woods; esculent swallows' nests; the holothurion, or tripang; sharks' fins, tortoise-shell, tin, pepper, areca-nut, cloves and nutmegs, hides and horns, opium, British iron, cottons, and woollens. In 1823, when, as already stated, the number of junks was six, the value of these exports was considered to be nine hundred and twenty-eight thousand seven hundred Spanish dollars; of which opium, British piece-goods, and woollens, amounted to two hundred and thirty thousand dollars. I believe that no later estimate has been attempted; but there

can be no question that the trade has very greatly increased. It was only as late as 1825 that junks began first to make their appearance from the island of Hainan. With the two maritime provinces of China, Chekiang and Kiangnan, which at present trade with the Philippines, Kamboja, and Tonquin, and once did so with the Sulo Islands, we have as yet had no intercourse in Singapore; but it may be hoped, that in time the merchants of these wealthy provinces may find their way to us.

Through Chinese junks there is no question but that a large quantity of tea might be imported, in a free trade, for the consumption of Europe, without being subjected to the expense of reaching us indirectly through the port of Canton; the only one with which Europeans have any intercourse. Some of the junks trading to Singapore are, from the very province, most distinguished for the production of tea. In 1823, the quantity of tea imported into Singapore by Chinese junks was only 17,640 lbs. In the three following years, it rose progressively, as follows:—111,200 lbs., 117,148 lbs. and 323,913 lbs. This tea is brought from almost every port of China with which we trade, and some is even imported indirectly from Kamboja and Siam. The whole is intended for native consumption, and is for the most part of the quality which in this country would be called good ordinary Bŏhea. In 1825, as mentioned in another place, it

was sold at so low a price as from threepence to sixpence a pound, according to quality. There is no doubt but any quantity and any quality for which the market would create a demand, might be imported in this manner. Even contemplating an event highly improbable, and, I think, indeed, nearly impossible, the total exclusion of a direct intercourse in European vessels with China, the trade might still be carried on through the channel of the junks, which, in reality, would amount to a direct intercourse with almost every port of a great empire, instead of with one, as at present. This is virtually the present state of our commercial intercourse with Cochin China, Kamboja, and Siam; although, in the latter case especially, the navigation is longer, more difficult and intricate, than it would be with any of the ports of China carrying on a foreign trade.

The native trade with Siam, Kamboja, and Cochin China, in its present extent, owes its origin to the establishment of Singapore; for previous to this epoch we had no such intercourse, except with the first-named of these countries, and even this of only a few years' standing, and of very trifling amount. The ports of trade are Bangkok in Siam; Saigun and Kangkao in Kamboja; and Quinhon, Faifo, and Hué, in Cochin China. There has been no intercourse as yet with any port of Tonquin. In 1820, the number of junks which arrived from all these places was twenty-one; in 1821,

thirty-three; in 1822, forty-two; in 1823, sixty-four; and in 1824, seventy. I possess no later account than these, but understand that the trade has greatly increased. Exclusive of the junks, I should mention that there have arrived every year, for the last three, from the Cochin Chinese capital, a merchant-ship and brig belonging to his Cochin Chinese Majesty, who, notwithstanding his Chinese prejudices, has lately become enamoured of the details and profits of trade. By far the most considerable branch of this traffic is that with Siam, and next to it stands that with the port of Saigun. The great staples of import are sugar, rice, salt, oil, and culinary utensils of cast iron. The exports consist of opium, catechu, tin, British iron, woollens, cotton piece-goods, and fire-arms. In 1823, when the junks, as above stated, amounted to no more than sixty-four, the imports were estimated at the value of 300,000 Spanish dollars. The following is an actual specimen of the import cargo of a Siamese junk of the largest class, with the prices at Singapore in 1824:—

		Sp. dol.	cents.	Total dol.
Sugar, clayed, 1st quality	1350 piculs	at 6	50	. . 8775
Sugar, coarse	. 80 —	— 2	66	. . 212
Rice, fine	. . 20 koyans*	—68	—	. . 1360
	Carried forward	. .		10,347

* The Koyan, at Singapore, is a measure of forty piculs, or near 5400 lbs. avoirdupois.

		Sp. dol.	cents.	Total dol.
Brought forward				10,347
Ditto, coarse	35 koyans	—55	—	1775
Salt	20 —	—27	—	540
Oil	150 piculs	— 5	66	849
Stick-lac	150 —	—13	—	1950
Nankins	1000 pieces	—60	—per 100	600
Tobacco	25 piculs	—16	—per picul	400
Salt fish	50 —	— 5	—	250
Total Spanish dollars				16,711

The largest branch of the trade of the Indian islanders with Singapore, is that of the Bugis of Wajo, a State of Celebes, the inhabitants of which have colonized in many countries of the Archipelago, and carry on what may be called the whole foreign trade of the countries in which they are settled. Through their means Singapore carries on a trade with Wajo, Mandar, Kaili, Macassar, and Pari-pari in Celebes, Bonirati, a small island on its coast, the islands of Sumbawa, Bali, Lombok, Flores, Sandal Wood, Timor, Ceram, the Arrows, New Guinea, and the east and west coasts of Borneo. The commodities of these different countries are imported by the Bugis into Singapore. The following is a brief enumeration of them:—striped and tartan cotton cloths (chiefly from Celebes, Bali, and Lombok), oil, rice, sapan-wood, tortoise-shell, esculent nests, the holothurion, birds of paradise, and a great variety of live birds

of the parrot tribe, of singular beauty of plumage. Above a hundred of the proas of the Bugis make an annual voyage to Singapore, each importing a cargo worth from twelve to thirty thousand Spanish dollars. Their exports consist chiefly of opium, British and Indian piece-goods, woollens, fire-arms and gunpowder, with Chinese earthenware, and Siamese culinary iron utensils.

In the north-western portion of the Malayan archipelago, the most distant point with which Singapore carries on a trade in native vessels, is the principality on the island of this name strictly called Borneo, together with the district lying west of it. In 1825, forty proas, many of them of great size, belonging to this people, visited Singapore, importing tortoise-shell, esculent swallows' nests, mother of pearl shells, Malayan camphor, a very considerable quantity of pepper, and recently large quantities of ore of antimony; and exporting opium, iron, cottons, and woollens. The trade of Sumatra, the Malayan peninsula, and the islands adjacent to both, is, owing to vicinity and facility of communication, of very considerable extent. In this intercourse are imported tin, pepper, crude sago, benjamin, lakka, and eagle-wood, catechu, areca-nuts, bricks, tiles, timber, fruits, poultry, &c. &c. Through the exportations of this branch are disseminated the products of Europe and the continent of India, already referred to. In this traffic is to be included the trade carried on between

Singapore and the neighbouring European settlements of Penang, Malacca, Rio, and Palembang, in small craft of European construction. In 1825, there cleared out from Singapore, for these different places, about seventy sail of this class; and in 1826, no less than one hundred and fourteen.

A few remarks upon some of the staple articles will show, in an interesting point of view, the extent, value, and progressive increase of the trade of the place. I shall refer to the exports, as affording the most correct index of the actual trade.

In 1822, the quantity of pepper exported was 2,327,000 lbs.; in 1823, 4,672,500 lbs.; in 1824, it fell to 3,104,400 lbs; in 1825, it rose to 5,272,850 lbs.; and in the following year it was nearly the same amount. The export of sugar in 1823 was 27,415 cwts.; in 1824 it was 20,000 cwts.; in 1825, 33,600 cwts.; and in 1826, 27,500 cwts. All the best of this commodity is imported from Siam, and, as mentioned in another place, is manufactured by the Chinese: it is equal in quality to the best sugars of Bengal, which are in very small quantity, and much superior to the generality of the produce of that country. Were the prohibitory duties in Great Britain taken off, such a measure would tend incalculably to the local prosperity of the settlement, the benefit of the consumer, and the general interests of British trade, manufactures, and navigation. In 1823, the exportation of tin was about 22,000 cwts.; in

1824, it was about 20,000 cwts.; in 1825, it fell to about 14,800; and in 1826, rose again to about 24,600 cwts., or 1230 tons. The exportation of coffee, in the year 1823, was 6134 cwts.; in 1824, it was about 5000 cwts.; in 1825, it was about 4300 cwts.; and in 1826, it rose to better than 31,000 cwts. Some of this produce is brought from the heart of Sumatra, from Celebes, and the Malay peninsula; and of this a great portion owes its growth to the market of Singapore. The exportation of rice, in 1823, amounted to 2920 tons; in 1824, to very nearly 6000 tons. In 1825, it fell to about 3000 tons; and in 1826 it rose again to 5100 tons. Neither Singapore, nor any country in its immediate neighbourhood, produces corn. It may be quoted, therefore, as a signal illustration of the advantages of a free commerce in this most important article. Not only does it supply its own consumption, but it exports to the large amount already stated. Last year the prices were so moderate, that it was able to export rice, to a considerable amount, even as far as the Isle of France. In a period of nine years it has not only not experienced any thing approaching to a scarcity, but prices have even been moderate, and subject to very little fluctuation. In 1824, the average price of rice, on the whole year, was one dollar forty-one cents per cwt.; and in 1825, it was nearly one dollar forty-four cents, or but

three cents more. This steadiness of price not only applies to one year compared with another, but to the different seasons of the same year. In a period of three years, I can recollect but of one remarkable rise in the price of grain: this was in April 1825, when rice rose to two dollars eighty-eight cents per cwt. This rise was produced by reports from Siam and Cochin China, that th Governments of those countries had put a temporary embargo on the exportation of grain. Considerable importations were soon brought from the neighbouring Malay countries, and in one fortnight the price fell to one dollar sixty-seven cents. Larger importations from Java produced a farther reduction, and for the remainder of the year the prices fell to the old standard. The average excess of the whole year, beyond the preceding one, was, as already stated, only *three* centimes on the cwt., or about two one-eighth per cent.

The same observations made in respect to rice apply equally to salt, which is brought from Siam and Cochin China, but chiefly from the former country, and of which not a grain is manufactured in the neighbourhood. Of this commodity there were exported, in 1823, about 1700 tons; in 1824, near 2000 tons; in 1825, better than 3000 tons; and in 1826, above 4000.

Opium forms a most important article of the trade of Singapore: in 1823, the exports amounted

to 69,300 lbs.; in 1824, to 144,900 lbs.; in 1825, to 120,675 lbs.; and in 1826, to 126,650 lbs. In the largest of these exportations, the value of the drug amounted to 1,118,636 Spanish dollars.

Singapore, as already stated, has become a place of depôt for some of the staple production of China. These are cassia, camphor, nankeens, and raw silk. In consequence of the monopoly of the East India Company, it is impracticable to make direct remittances to Europe from China, except by sending such portions of the produce of that country as may be dealt in according to law, indirectly to Europe through an Indian port. Goods used to be sent with this view by the circuitous routs of Madras, Calcutta, and Bombay. They are at present sent, in much larger quantities, by the more convenient channel of Singapore. In 1825, the quantity of cassia exported was 219,676 lbs., and of raw silk 136,900 lbs.

The staple articles which connect the commerce of Singapore with that of Europe, are cotton piece-goods, woollens, fire-arms, and ammunition; with iron. British cottons were exported, in 1823, to the extent of 172,500 pieces; in 1824, to the extent of 143,300 pieces; in 1825, to the extent of 153,035 pieces; in 1826, in consequence of the general depression of trade attending that period, the exports fell off to 101,765 pieces. I may take this opportunity of mentioning, that the whole exports

of cotton goods, whether of Great Britain, Continental India, or the Malayan Islands, in 1825, were no less than 404,355. In 1823, the quantity of British woollens exported from Singapore was only 784 pieces; on the average of the years 1824 and 25, they had increased to 3336 pieces.

A free trade with the Indians, in fire-arms and ammunition, was unknown until the establishment of Singapore; indeed, as far as concerned our old settlements, whether the prohibition was politic or otherwise, such a traffic was contrary to law. In 1823, there were exported from Singapore 12,000 muskets and 5600 lbs. of gunpowder; in 1824, 14,411 muskets and 38,600 lbs. of gunpowder; in 1825, 6432 muskets and 73,616 lbs. of gunpowder; and in 1826, 2402 muskets and 43,397 lbs. of gunpowder. Arguments of little validity have been urged against the character of this traffic, which, it appears to me, may be answered and refuted without difficulty: they amount to this,—that the supplying of the Indians with fire-arms is dangerous to our political power, and calculated to encourage piracy. Among the Indians there is a demand for fire-arms; and if we do not furnish them, our commercial competitors will. For example, the Americans now supply the whole pepper coast of Sumatra; and before the trade was tolerated at Singapore, they had supplied Siam, in less than two years, with above

30,000 stand of fire-arms. The prohibition to supply them, therefore, on the part of British subjects, to nations over whom we have no political control, would amount to nothing more or less than giving a monopoly to our competitors. With respect to the supply of European fire-arms encouraging piracy, it should be recollected, that they are just as likely to be used for defensive as offensive purposes; probably, indeed, more so, as the wealthy trader is more likely to command an effectual supply than the needy pirate. If we could disarm both parties, the objection indeed would be valid, but this is wholly impracticable and out of our power. Even in a political view, solid arguments may be urged in favour of this commerce. While barbarous nations depend upon civilized ones for the munitions of war, and abandon the modes and habits of warfare natural to their condition, the former are only the more at the mercy of the latter; and it is a matter of notoriety, that no Indian nations have been so speedily subdued as those who have attempted to imitate European tactics. The effect of fire-arms in civilizing the barbarous tribes themselves, should not be overlooked. The possession of them gives the more intelligent and commercial tribes an advantage over their ruder neighbours, and thus a power is established, which cannot fail to tend more or less to the diminution of anarchy, and

the melioration of law and government. If this reasoning be well-founded, and I think it would be difficult to controvert it, a law prohibiting the sale of the munitions of war to nations and tribes over whom we exercise no control, and with whom we scarcely maintain any political relations, is to all purposes as inefficient as it is unwise and impolitic.

I shall now advert to one or two articles which have been either entirely created in consequence of the existence of Singapore, or which, as the result of that event, reach the great markets of Europe more cheaply. The article of tortoise-shell, a produce of the Indian Islands, used to find its way to Europe by the indirect route of China, loaded with the charges of an unskilful and barbarous commerce. Nearly the whole of the traffic in this article now centres in Singapore. The native importer receives for it double the price he used to do, and the article is cheaper in Europe than ever. The quantity of this commodity exported from Singapore, in 1823, was only 3224 lbs.; in 1824, it was 3671 lbs.; in 1825, it was above 10,000 lbs.; and in 1826, it was 16,000 lbs.—In 1825, it was accidentally discovered that a rich sulphuret of antimony was an abundant mineral on the north coast of Borneo. This commodity, heretofore unknown in the commerce between India and Europe, and which, in fact, could not by any possibility be ex-

ported in the former condition of the Indian trade, was tried as a remittance by the merchants of Singapore, and seems to have answered perfectly. In 1825, two hundred and fifty tons of it were exported to England; and in 1826, very nearly six hundred tons. Bullion is largely imported into, and exported from, Singapore. Gold dust is brought from Celebes, Borneo, Sumatra, and the east coast of the Malay peninsula, and chiefly remitted to Calcutta. The quantity exported in 1826 amounted to 6720 oz. The specie exported in the same year amounted to the value of 918,316 Spanish dollars.

These statements will suffice to show the extent and value of the trade carried on through the medium of the new settlement. Some speculators have conjectured that this trade was only an old one conducted through a new channel. To carry on an old trade through a new, and it follows, if no violence be used in bringing about the change, a cheaper channel, would be no inconsiderable recommendation of a new emporium; but its advantages are not so limited, as a very brief statement will show. In the year 1818, the whole of the direct British trade with the Straits of Malacca, and generally with the Eastern Islands, excluding Java, centered at Penang, or Prince of Wales's Island, the exports from which amounted to no more than 2,030,757 Spanish dollars. This

was in the year immediately preceding the establishment of Singapore. In 1824, the joint exports of Penang and Singapore amounted to 9,414,464 Spanish dollars, of which those of Singapore amounted to 6,604,601 Spanish dollars. In other words, this branch of the British trade had been considerably more than quadrupled in the short period of little more than six years.

The Port Regulations established for Singapore were upon as liberal and convenient a footing as it was possible to frame them. When I took civil charge of the settlement in 1823, certain anchorage fees were charged on vessels of all descriptions, and the wooding, watering, and ballasting of ships was a virtual monopoly for the advantage of the public officers: under the sanction of the Supreme Government, this practice was abolished. The wooding, watering, and ballasting of ships was thrown open to general competition, and no fee or charge of any sort whatsoever was levied either on account of the Government or its officers. The commanders of the European vessels were directed to render to the Master-attendant, upon honour, a written statement of their exports and imports, before receiving their port clearances; and the masters of native vessels gave in verbal statements on similar conditions. In this manner, a record of the trade of the port, probably not less accurate than most custom-house

returns,—for there were few motives for concealment,—was obtained. The only attempts at regulating prices, referred to the hire of cargo-boats, and the charges for wooding, watering, and ballasting. The object of this was protection to strangers from imposition; and, having this end alone in view, it applied to no ship whose stay exceeded forty-eight hours. Complaints were at first made that the maximus were fixed at too low a rate, but in a very short time I had the satisfaction to see that competition had greatly reduced them.

Ships lie in the Roads of Singapore, at the distance of from a mile to two miles from the town, according to their draught of water. With the assistance of a great number of convenient lighters, which are always in readiness, cargoes may be taken in and discharged, with scarcely any interruption, throughout the year. The river, or creek, upon which the commercial portion of the town lies, is accessible to these lighters at all times, and goods are taken in and discharged at a convenient quay, constructed during my stay at the place, and at the very doors of the principal warehouses. Whether from its natural situation, the absence of meddling and embarrassing regulations, or troublesome usages, there is no port of trade where commerce had been subjected to less inconvenience. Frequent holidays, which are such se-

rious obstacles to trade in other parts of India, have, in reality, no injurious influence whatever in Singapore; for there are none which affect the population generally, so as to obstruct the daily transaction of business. It is much to be regretted that the local Government should of late, where no revenue is raised from duties of customs, have adopted so injudicious and capricious a measure as imposing all the forms and shackles of a custom-house. The mode of transacting business among the European merchants is simple and efficient. Instead of trusting their affairs to native agents, as in other parts of India, they transact them in person, with the occasional assistance of a Chinese Creole as an interpreter and broker.

In 1819, as already named, Singapore was inhabited by a few hundred piratical Malayan fishermen. About five years after this, or in January 1824, the first census was taken, and the population was found to amount to ten thousand six hundred and eighty-three. The following table shows its progressive increase down to the latest accounts:—

POPULATION.

	1824	1825			1826			1827		
	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Europeans	74	60	24	84	81	30	111	69	18	87
Native Christians	74	89	43	132	133	73	206	128	60	188
Armenians	16	8	1	9	13	5	18	16	3	19
Arabs	15	10		10	17		17	18		18
Natives of Coromandel and Malabar	390	687	3	690	573	32	605	772	5	777
Natives of Bengal and other parts of Hindostan	366	196	30	226	257	127	384	209	35	244
Siamese								5	2	7
Bugis	1,851	1,190	514	1,704	863	579	1,442	666	576	1,242
Malays	4,580	2,791	2,339	5,130	3,264	2,433	5,697	2,501	2,289	4,790
Javanese		28	10	38	113	33	146	174	93	267
Chinese	3,317	3,561	267	3,828	3,883	396	4,279	5,747	341	6,088
African Negroes								2	3	5
Total	10,683	8,620	3,231	11,851	9,197	3,708	12,905	10,307	3,425	13,732

From this statement are excluded the floating population of strangers, commonly estimated at

about two thousand five hundred; the convicts sent from the continent of India, and the military, with their followers. The convicts, in my time, amounted only to two hundred; but there are at present about three times this number. The military and camp-followers, in 1824, amounted, in all, to no more than three hundred and ninety-six; and in 1825, to only three hundred and sixty-eight: in 1826, they amounted to six hundred and sixty-five; and, at present, are probably about double this number. On this estimate, the population of 1827 will amount, in round numbers, to sixteen thousand.

The most rapid increase of the population took place in the few first years after the formation of the settlement, when the field was nearly unoccupied. At this period, numerous emigrants and adventurers repaired to the place from the declining settlement of Malacca, or took shelter at it from the disorder and anarchy prevalent in the Malayan countries in the neighbourhood. The most numerous class of the inhabitants are the Chinese. By the last return, these, in fact, are found to constitute nearly one-half of the whole fixed population. In Singapore they are commonly divided into five classes, all industrious; but generally differing from each other materially in manner, character, and language. These are the Creole, or mixed race; natives of Macao and other islands at the mouth of the river of Canton; natives of

the town of Canton, and other seaports of the province of the same name; natives of Fokien; and, finally, a race of fishermen from the sea-coast of the province of Canton, commonly denominated Aya. The Creole Chinese are intelligent, always acquainted with the Malayan language, and occasionally with the English: they are considered inferior in industry to the rest, but are beneficially employed as brokers, shopkeepers, and general merchants. The emigrants from Fokien are considered superior, both in respectability and enterprise, to the rest of their countrymen. Next to them come those of the town of Canton and other principal ports of that province. The Chinese of Macao are not considered very reputable, and the lowest in the scales,—the most disorderly, but the most numerous, are the race of fishermen. In 1825, the number of emigrants which arrived at Singapore, direct from China, amounted to three thousand five hundred and eighteen; and in 1826 they amounted to five thousand five hundred and thirteen. Of the greater number of these, Singapore is the mere landing-place, for they are soon scattered among the neighbouring countries, a great number especially repairing to Rhio and the neighbouring islands, where the cultivation and manufacture of the catechu is extensively conducted. It will appear by the returns, that, in the short period of four years, the Chinese population of Singapore was very nearly doubled. The next

most numerous class of the population are the natives of the islands. Incapable of maintaining competition in almost any line with the Chinese, these had rather diminished than increased during the last four years. Their principal employment is as fishermen, woodcutters, boatmen, petty cultivators, and petty shopkeepers. The most respectable are the Bugis, almost always employed in trade. Of the pure Malays, the most docile and industrious are the emigrants from Malacca. The lowest in the scale are the Malays of the immediate neighbourhood, and the worst among these the retainers of the native princes. Even these, however, were far from being found either indocile or difficult of management. The Indians of the Malabar and Coromandel coast stand next to the Chinese, and, of the Asiatic population, come nearest to that industrious people in usefulness and intelligence. Like them, their numbers have been doubled in the period given in the return. In the last year of the statement, seven Siamese are enumerated, whose presence, however, is purely accidental; and there are no Cochin Chinese. This fact affords a striking contrast between the policy and state of society in China, and the less civilised countries of Siam and Cochin China. In the last year of the return it will be seen, that the number of European settlers, almost all British-born subjects, amounted only to eighty-seven. During the first eight years of the

history of the settlement, no restraint or condition whatever was imposed upon the settlement and colonization of Englishmen,—no licence was demanded, and they were permitted to own property in the land, upon terms as liberal and easy as can be supposed in any new settled country. The badness of the soil is indeed an obstacle to their settlement as colonists; but still, the small number of settlers is a proof that there would not only be neither danger nor inconvenience in the freest settlement of Europeans in India generally; but that the measure would be beneficial beyond any other which can be contemplated. Few as the British settlers of Singapore are, they constitute in reality the life and spirit of the settlement; and it may safely be asserted, that without them, and without their existing in a state of independence and security, there would exist neither capital, enterprise, activity, confidence, or order.

In perusing the Returns of the Population, the reader will be forcibly struck with one remarkable character of it,—the numerical disproportion of females to males. For the whole population there is little more than one of the former to three of the latter. It is in the Malay population alone that there is any thing like an equality. The disproportion is of course chiefly occasioned by the laws or prejudices of the parent countries of the principal portion of the emigrants, the natives of India, and the Chinese, but especially of the latter,

of whom the women, as is well known, are never permitted to emigrate. With these last, the proportion of females to males little exceeds one to seventeen. It should at the same time be observed, in respect to the whole population, that a very large proportion consists of young men in the prime of life. It is evident therefore, taking the returns of 1827 for an example, that the effectual working and labouring population should not be reckoned, if the comparison be made with other states of society, at 13,732, as there given, but at least at double the male population, or 20,614. If we take the average value of the labour, skill, and intelligence of a Chinese to be in the proportion of three to one to those of a native of the continent of India, then the effectual population of Singapore may be considered equal in efficiency to a numerical population of 32,108 natives of Hindostan.

A few observations upon wages and profits will not be out of place. The great bulk of the labouring population are Chinese. In 1825, the wages of a common Chinese day-labourer were eight dollars a-month; and of a common artisan, twelve dollars. The bread-corn consumed by both is invariably rice, which is the highest quality of farinaceous aliment for the country and climate, bearing, as it does in the tropical countries of India, the same relation to maize, millet, sago, and farinaceous roots, that wheat does to barley,

oats, rye, and potatoes in temperate regions. With his rice the common labourer consumes fish, occasionally pork, and very generally a considerable quantity of ardent spirits. The class of artificers live better, generally adding to the rations now mentioned a daily allowance of pork, a more liberal allowance of spirits, and some tea. In the year above-stated, and probably matters have not much changed since, the monthly expenses of a day-labourer were estimated as follow :—

Food - -	4 dollars and	80	Cents.
Clothing - -	1 —	10	—
Lodging - -		20	—

His whole yearly expense, at this rate, will be seventy-three dollars twenty cents, and his wages being ninety-six dollars, it would be in his power to save above twenty-two Spanish dollars. The wages of the other classes of the inhabitants are much lower than those of the Chinese, being proportionate to the value of their labour, but from their habits their expenditure is also much smaller.

The rates of profit at Singapore may be estimated from the interest of money among the native traders. It is from two to five per cent. per mensem, according to the nature of the security. Among Europeans it was in 1825, on the personal security of the most respectable merchants, from ten to twelve per cent. per annum. At the same period, substantial houses of brick and mortar, capable of being insured in England, were worth

about five years' purchase, and brought an interest on the capital laid out of from fifteen to twenty per cent.

The town of Singapore is naturally divided into three portions, namely, the Malay part;—that which contains the dwellings of the European merchants, the public offices, and the military cantonments; and the Chinese, or commercial portion. The two first are situated upon a plain fronting the harbour, running to the length of about a mile and a half along the shore, and having its breadth confined to about one thousand yards by a range of hills of from one hundred to one hundred and fifty feet high. The commercial portion of the town is divided from the other two by the salt creek already named, and is situated upon a narrow peninsula, lying between this last and the sea to the westward. The Malayan portion of the town lies at the eastern portion of the plain, and is chiefly occupied by the Sultan of Jehore and his followers, from whom we purchased the island, and who is our pensionary. The dwellings of the merchants and the military cantonments occupy the central and western portion of the same plain, and the highest portion of the range of hills which I have named is occupied by the Government-house, other portions by the dwellings of public officers or merchants. Almost all the best warehouses and the whole dwellings of the Chinese are on the peninsula, to the west-

ern side of the creek, which is connected with the plain by a very good wooden bridge. The whole of the warehouses, and all the dwelling-houses in the principal streets in their vicinity, are built of brick and lime, and roofed with red tile. The more distant dwelling-houses and shops are built of wood, but roofed with tile also; and it is only in the distant outskirts that any huts with thatched roofs are to be found, although, five years ago, nearly the whole of this portion of the town was composed of dwellings of this last description. The streets are formed upon a regular plan, intersecting each other at right angles; and the roads, both in the town and the immediate vicinity of the settlement, are constructed of a mixture of sand with a clay-iron-ore, which, constituting the crust of all the hills in the island, is of course abundant. These materials make roads which are at once level and durable.

There are two public markets, the property of Government, the leases of the stalls of which are separately sold, from year to year, by public auction. These are furnished with grain, fish, poultry, eggs, vegetables, spiceries, pork, green turtles, &c. &c. The supply of these articles is always abundant; and when it is considered that most of them are imported, and some from a great distance, they are comparatively cheap.

The profit derived by the Government from the markets is the mere rent of the ground and

stalls; for the sale in them of any description of goods is not compulsory, every one being at liberty to sell whatever he pleases, and where he pleases, with the necessary exception of erecting stalls or sheds in the open streets, which would, of course, amount to a nuisance, prejudicial to the health and comfort of the inhabitants.

During the first seven years of its existence, Singapore was a residency, administered by a subordinate officer, directly responsible for all his acts to the Supreme Government of India. This officer, with the aid of two assistants, and two or three clerks, discharged the whole civil duties of the settlement, including the administration of justice, police, the pay department civil and military; while in his separate capacity as agent to the Governor-General, he conducted our political relations with Siam, Cochin China, and other countries lying to the eastward of the Straits of Malacca.

No legal sanction for administering justice existed in the early years of the settlement. The regular cession of it had not then been obtained; it was unacknowledged by the Crown or Parliament, and the Supreme Government of India, therefore, was without the power of delegating any authority to the local officers for the due administration of justice. The resident, under these circumstances, was compelled to assume an authority which by law he did not possess. Justice, civil

and criminal, was administered by the resident and his first assistant, by summary process, and after the manner of a court of conscience. The fees and costs of any one suit never exceeded six or seven shillings, and more commonly did not amount to one-half this sum. Every cause was brought to a hearing within eight-and-forty hours of the commencement of the suit or trial, and unless some difficulty existed in procuring evidence, a decision was given either on the first day of hearing, or at farthest on the second. In criminal cases there were no fees or costs whatever. Punishments were confined to very small pecuniary fines; imprisonment, and hard labour, never exceeding six months' duration; and, where disgrace accompanied the offence, whipping, in no case exceeding thirty strokes of a cane. In capital offences, confining this term to murder and piracy, the only resource was to imprison the offenders indefinitely when the evidence was unquestionable, or to discharge them when it was doubtful. Among the Chinese and Malays, and the matter was entirely confined to these, several cases of murder occurred, perpetrated in open day, and witnessed by numbers. The proportion of such offences was, however, far smaller than at Penang, where there was a regular administration of justice,—a matter perhaps chiefly to be ascribed to the high effectual price of labour, and the hearty and flourishing condition of the settlement

I may here remark, that in a motley population of about fourteen thousand (strangers included), the monthly number of suits and trials seldom exceeded one hundred. A singular difference was observed in the degree of litigiousness which belonged to the different classes of the inhabitants. The two most industrious, intelligent, and wealthy classes, the Europeans and the Chinese, were by far the least litigious; neither was there much litigation amongst those of the Malay race. The natives of Western India scarcely constituted a thirteenth part of the whole population, and yet they were parties to a great majority of all the suits and trials which were instituted.

I was anxious to introduce the forms of a jury trial, both in civil and criminal cases; and an attempt was made with this view, which was defeated by the repugnance of the Europeans to sit as jurors with the natives, unless under legal sanction. The police of the town was very efficiently maintained and regulated. The funds for this purpose were drawn from the voluntary contributions of the principal European and native inhabitants, and the regulations were framed from a code of police laws drawn up for the island of Bombay, the outlines of which were sketched by a mind of a higher order than Indian legislation has often had the benefit of.* After a legal ces-

* The code, in its original form, was framed by Sir James Mackintosh, when Recorder of Bombay.

sion of the island had been obtained, farther measures were taken for a more efficient administration of justice; and with this view the principal merchants of the place, as well as the officers of Government, were put in the commission of the peace, and empowered to administer civil and criminal justice. This arrangement, however, had hardly been ordered, when the home authorities, under the sanction of an Act of Parliament, erected the three settlements of Penang, Singapore, and Malacca into one government, and in due course the Crown granted a new charter, extending the jurisdiction of the Recorder's Court of the first settlement to the other two, and giving authority for instituting Courts of Requests for the trial of all suits not exceeding in value the trifling sum of thirty-two Spanish dollars.

In respect to the Recorder's Court, it should be explained that it differs essentially in its constitution from the King's Courts of the principal presidencies. At the last, the form of process has all the technical and intricate forms of the superior courts in England. In the Recorder's Court, the forms are so simplified as to suit the English law to the state of society among the native inhabitants,—thus making the administration of justice cheap, simple, and therefore so far efficient. This, however, is the whole extent of the advantage. The Governor, with his three counsellors, are not only judges as well as the Recorder, but all of them

superior to him in rank. In this manner there is an impolitic union of the executive, legislative, and judicial functions; and the independence and dignity of the judicial character are necessarily impaired or degraded by placing the only lawyer, and only efficient judge of the court, in an inferior and dependent situation. By the modification of this court, which extends its jurisdiction to Singapore and Malacca, the court can only exist where the Governor, the keeper of the seal, is actually present, and of course no process can be issued. For two-thirds of the year, therefore, every settlement, in its turn, must be deprived of the administration of justice, excepting as far as regards the petty suits already mentioned. This is a state of things wholly unsuited to any condition of society, and, above all, to a place where a busy commercial intercourse is conducted; and, unless the error be speedily repaired, it must give rise to inconvenience seriously detrimental to the prosperity of the place.

In 1825, the Civil Establishment consisted of the Resident and his assistants, already mentioned, besides constables, &c. The annual charge of this branch amounted to about fifty thousand Spanish dollars. The Military amounted only to about a hundred and fifty Sepoys, and native artillery, without a single European, except the officers. In a period of peace, and among an industrious population, in which the elements of anarchy, discon-

tent, or insurrection, had no existence, this small force was quite adequate to every useful purpose. In proof of the good disposition of the inhabitants, I may quote one example. In 1825, the assassinations which had taken place among the Malays, the only armed class of the inhabitants, made it necessary, as a measure of prudence, to disarm them. This would have been an easy measure, but for the presence of the native chiefs, whose retainers encouraged their countrymen to resist. This threatened resistance coming to the knowledge of the Chinese, the most respectable of them waited upon me, to say, that they were ready to assist the authorities in carrying the measure of disarming the Malays into effect. Neither their assistance, however, nor that of the military, was necessary; for, in the sequel, the Malays quietly and peaceably acquiesced. The expense of the military garrison amounted to less than thirty-five thousand Spanish dollars a-year. To these disbursements is to be added a sum of twenty-four thousand Spanish dollars, paid as yearly stipends to the native princes, from whom we obtained the sovereignty of the island. This sum was only an annuity for life; and, by the death of one of the parties, was considerably reduced within the first year. The total ordinary disbursements of the island were, according to this statement, a hundred and nine thousand Spanish dollars. The extraordinary expenses for local con-

tingencies, transport of troops, stores, and ammunition, may safely be estimated not to have exceeded eleven thousand Spanish dollars,—making the total expenditure, in round numbers, a hundred and twenty thousand Spanish dollars. The local revenue, in the same year, amounted, in round numbers, to eighty-seven thousand Spanish dollars; so that the actual cost of the settlement was only thirty-three thousand. The export trade of the settlement in the same year amounted to five millions eight hundred and thirty-seven thousand three hundred and seventy dollars. A branch of trade, the greater portion of which was new, was therefore carried on at a charge to the State of no more than one-half per cent. upon its amount.

I shall briefly describe the sources from which the above revenue was raised. The following were the items, from which it will be seen that the greater portion was an excise duty collected by the farming system: a tax on the retail consumption of opium; a tax on home-made spirits; a tax on gaming; one on the licensing of pawnbrokers; with quit-rents, rents of markets, and post-office dues. With respect to opium, gaming, and spirits, a limited number of licences, according to an estimate of the necessity in each case, was sold by public auction, to the highest bidder, for the period of one year, the duty being paid by monthly instalments. This was an improve-

ment upon the old system, so long familiar to the native inhabitants of the Eastern Islands from its prevalence in all the European establishments, and which consisted in selling the monopoly of the farm of each article of revenue to one individual, instead of splitting them into a number of licences, with a view of extending competition. In 1823, the revenue of Singapore, on the old system, and arising out of these duties, amounted only to 25,796 dollars. The increased prosperity of the settlement, the augmentation of inhabitants, and the improved arrangement in its management, raised it, in 1824, to 60,672 Spanish dollars; in 1825, it rose to 75,462 Spanish dollars; in 1826, although there was some depression in the trade, the duties did not fall off, but were of the same amount as in the preceding year.

The quit-rents are at present inconsiderable, and chiefly, if not entirely, derived from those levied on the ground occupied by houses within the town. They will, however, keep pace with the progress of improvement, and no doubt become eventually an important branch of the revenue. This subject leads me to say a few words on the tenures of land in Singapore. The island was a desert when first occupied by us, and the right of property and sovereignty in it belonged to a native prince, from whom the East India Company purchased it both for themselves and their successors. To obviate the many legal difficulties

which would arise in a commercial settlement, and among a population, the great bulk of whom are not English, the grants of land given by the local Government are not in perpetuity, and to heirs of the grantee, but leases for a period of nine hundred and ninety-nine years. The technical difficulties of a real property are in this manner obviated, and the intrinsic value of the estate is in no manner impaired.

An injudicious attempt has, as I understand, been recently made to raise a revenue from the land, in imitation of the land revenue of the Hindoo and Mohammedan Governments of India. In the latter country, it is needless to say, that the principal portion, at least of the land-tax, is the rent of land,—a subject which cannot exist in a new country like Singapore, where there is a hundred times more land of the best quality, such as it is, than the inhabitants can occupy. If any tax be levied here, it must be one upon the capital laid out upon the clearing and improvement of the soil; and of course must prove so oppressive, as either to discourage improvement, or drive the cultivators altogether to another employment, or to other countries. A very short experience of this scheme will, in all likelihood, demonstrate to the local authority that it is equally impracticable and impolitic. An income tax, however unsuitable to such a state of society, it is obvious, would be less pernicious.

Upon the Excise duties, a few detailed explanations and remarks will be necessary. The annual retail consumption of opium in Singapore amounts to about five chests, and each chest being of about 150 lbs. the whole will amount, in round numbers, to 750 lbs. of the drug: the prime cost of this, or the price paid for it to the cultivator and manufacturer, is about one hundred and twenty-five dollars per chest. We may take one thousand five hundred dollars a-chest, or ten dollars per pound, for an ordinary wholesale price at Singapore. The price of the whole consumption of the place, therefore, is seven thousand five hundred dollars. The local duty paid to Government, or the amount of the farm, for the year 1826, was twenty-four thousand three hundred and eighty-four dollars; upon these two sums we must allow a moderate profit to the farmer, which at Singapore will certainly not be overrated at twenty per cent. This makes the total cost of five chests thirty-eight thousand two hundred and sixty dollars; of one chest, seven thousand six hundred and fifty-two; and of every pound, between 10*l.* and 11*l.* sterling. The difference between this and the prime cost, by far the largest portion of which is tax, is at the enormous rate of above six thousand per cent. This is altogether a singular and curious circumstance in the history of taxation. It is an idle prejudice to suppose that the consumption of opium, in the

manner it is used by the Chinese and Malays, is in any respect more pernicious than that of ardent spirits among the northern nations; it is certain that it is even less so, for those who abuse the one are infinitely fewer than those who abuse the other. The professed opium smokers, whom I have myself seen, were very few in number: and it is well known that those who use the drug to excess, are as much shunned, and considered as despicable as habitual drunkards of any other description. The real quantity consumed, after all, is comparatively trifling, although the practice is pretty general. Thus confining the opium smokers in Singapore to the Malayan races and the Chinese, and omitting the women altogether, it will be found that the real consumption of each person does not exceed one and one-fifth of a grain a-day. The distant consumers of China, Tonquin, Cochin China, Siam, and the Malay Islands, consume of course much smaller quantities. There is therefore no more foundation for saying that we poison and demoralize the nations we supply with this drug, than there would be for asserting that the French, by supplying the other nations of Europe with wines and brandies, inflicted upon them similar injuries. All the races of men, in whatever part of the globe, desire or require some one thing or another productive of intoxication; and whether this be beer, spirits, wine, or opium, seems a matter of taste or indifference. At all events, the

affair is one with which the moralist or the legislator has no pretence for interference.

The revenue derived in Singapore, in 1826, from gaming, amounted to 36,500 Spanish dollars. This was a heavy tax on a propensity which is very strong, both with the Chinese and Malays, and among all classes of them. The practice, when not carried to excess, is viewed by them as a mere harmless pastime—a necessary amusement: to suppress it is impossible. An attempt with this view was made on the establishment of the King's court at Prince of Wales's Island. The effect of this measure was the universal corruption of the inferior officers of the police, with whose connivance gambling was carried on clandestinely, instead of openly. An attempt equally unsuccessful was made at Singapore, which, in 1823, drove a thousand of the Chinese inhabitants out of the place. What it was hopeless to root out, it was found prudent to tolerate and regulate. Cock-fighting, playing on credit, and other practices, which might lead to broils or contention, were abolished; and gaming, where permitted, placed under the immediate surveillance of the police. The effect of this measure, which offered no violence to the prejudices or habits of the people, was to restrict gaming as much as, under any circumstances, it was possible; and I had the satisfaction to find, after three years' experience, that the peace and order of the settlement were never once disturbed from a cause which, in

other places, had often given rise to strife and bloodshed.

The history of the formation of the settlement may be told in very few words. After the impolitic measure of restoring the Dutch colonies without any condition whatever in favour of the commerce of the nation, as far as related to the Eastern Islands, various schemes were submitted to the public or to the Indian Governments for the formation of one or more *emporia* in the Eastern seas, where the freedom and security of British trade might be established. One of these was submitted, by the late Sir Stamford Raffles, to the Marquess of Hastings, in the year 1818, and adopted by that nobleman. Sir Stamford Raffles himself, and Colonel Farquhar, before Resident of Malacca, were entrusted with the formation of the projected settlement. Down to the very moment of forming it, no particular spot was contemplated for this purpose. The present Dutch settlement of Rhio was first proposed as the most suitable situation; but it was found to be preoccupied by the officers of the Netherland Government. The Carimon islands next attracted attention; and the expedition, under Sir Stamford Raffles, actually stopped at these for three days, intending, if found eligible, to form the settlement here.* The next

* I examined the Carimon islands personally in 1825, and am of opinion that they are in some respects more eligible than Singapore. While Singapore commands but one passage, they com-

place determined upon was the old town of Jehore, ten miles up the river of that name. The selection of this place, at once out of the way and insalubrious, must have been attended by a total failure. Fortunately, in passing through the Straits, the expedition, on the suggestion of Colonel Farquhar, from whose personal statement I relate the circumstance, touched at Singapore for information. The obvious advantages of the place could not be overlooked; a negotiation was opened with the native chief, and on the 6th of February 1819, two days after the arrival of the expedition, the British flag was hoisted, and the settlement duly formed.

It is singular that the island of Singapore was well known to be a suitable place for a commercial emporium, above a century before we occupied it as such. This is sufficiently proved by the following passage from Captain Hamilton's new account of the East Indies, published in 1739:— "In anno 1703, I called at Jehore on my way to China, and he (the Prince of Jehore) treated me very kindly, and made me a present of the island of Singapore; but I told him it could be of no use to a private person, though a proper place for a company to settle a colony on, lying

mand all the avenues of the great Straits. In a military point of view, they are more defensible; they abound in tin; there is wider room, and a better soil for agricultural pursuits; there is no want of shelter and anchorage, and the climate is salubrious.

in the centre of trade, and being accommodated with good rivers and safe harbours; so conveniently situated, that all winds served shipping both to go out and come into those rivers."* This remarkable description, however, was neither known to the founders, nor to any one else at the time.

In the first agreement with the native chief, the arrangement amounted to little more than a permission for the formation of a British factory and establishment, along two miles of the northern shore, and inland to the extent of the point-blank range of a cannon shot. There was in reality no territorial cession giving a legal right of legislation. The only law which could have existed was the Malay code. The native chief was considered to be the proprietor of the land, even within the bounds of the British factory, and he was to be entitled, in perpetuity, to one-half of such duties of customs as might hereafter be levied at the port. In the progress of the settlement, these arrangements were of course found highly inconvenient and embarrassing, and were annulled by the treaty which I am about to describe.

* Here ends Captain Hamilton's accuracy; and, in truth, what is added is little better than fabulous. He found, he says, a certain bean in the island, equal in taste and beauty to the best garden beans of Europe, growing wild in the forests; and under the same circumstances sugar-cane, that was five or six inches in circumference;—there is nothing of either kind in the woods of Singapore.

The island of Singapore belonged to the Malayan principality of Jehore, a state which was probably never of much consequence, and for the last century had been of none at all. Sultan Mahomet, the last prince, died about the year 1810, leaving no legitimate issue. No prince of his family assumed the throne in immediate succession to him, and the country was dismembered among his principal officers. The Bindhara (treasurer, or first minister,) took to himself the territory of Pahang, on the eastern coast of the Malay peninsula, and is now commonly designated Raja of that place. The Tumangung, or chief judge, seized upon the corresponding territory, on the western side, with the adjacent islands. This is the person from whom we received the first grant of our factory. He informed me that he had settled in Singapore, for the first time, in 1811, a few months before our expedition passed through the harbour, on its route to the capture of Java. Sultan Mahomet had two illegitimate sons, who were competitors for the throne; but the claims of neither were attended to; and they continued in a state of vagrancy and poverty, until the Dutch and English Governments, for their own purposes, thought it necessary to patronize respectively one of the parties. One of them, now acknowledged Sultan of Jehore, and who still resides in the island, came over to it a short time after our first occupation, and was in due course placed upon

our pension list. It was with this individual and the inferior chief already named, that a treaty for the cession of the island was concluded in August 1824. They received for the sovereignty and fee-simple of the island, as well as of all the seas, straits, and islands lying within ten miles of its coasts, the sum of 60,000 Spanish dollars, with an annuity of 24,000 Spanish dollars during their natural lives; and it was farther guaranteed that they or their successors should receive a donation of 35,000 Spanish dollars, should they be desirous at any time of quitting the British territory and retiring into their own dominions. Other articles of the treaty provided that neither party should interfere in the domestic quarrels of the other; that their Highnesses should receive at all times an asylum and a hospitable reception at Singapore, should they be distressed in their own dominions; and that slavery, under whatever name or modification, should have no existence within the British territories. This last subject had been a source of great annoyance, both to the native chiefs and to the local administration. Their Highnesses claimed as slaves, not only their own retainers, but every Malay coming from whatever part of the state of Jehore. Their followers, where every one else was free and labour well rewarded, were naturally impatient of this assumption; and the disputes which arose were the frequent cause of serious difficulties, both in main-

taining the peace of the settlement, and in the administration of justice. At present, slavery is totally unknown in the island, for the treaty emancipated even the retainers of the native chiefs.

This account of Singapore, I fear, may appear to some of my readers tedious; but there are others who, I am convinced, will read with interest a history of the rise and progress of the first settlement, in which the principle of free trade and unshackled intercourse has been fully and fairly acted upon in India.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX A.

NARRATIVE OF AN EMBASSY FROM THE KING OF AVA TO THE KING OF COCHIN CHINA.

In the year 1823, the very one following our own Mission, the present King of Ava, who had just ascended the throne, sent an Embassy to the King of Cochin China, the circumstances and results of which are so illustrative of the character of the two Governments of Ava and Cochin China, but more particularly of the last, that I have deemed a succinct account of it worth appending to the present work. The following brief explanation of the circumstances which led to the Burmese Mission, and of the manner in which the Narrative fell into my hands, and has been prepared, will be necessary.—In 1822, a certain Cochin Chinese petty chief, or inferior officer, who had once professed the Christian religion, but apostatized, represented to Chao Kun, the Governor of Kamboja, so frequently mentioned in my Journal, that a mine of wealth might be made by purchasing esculent swallows' nests in Ava and sending

them as a speculation for sale to China. Such was the trivial source of a Mission from Cochin China to Ava, and of that from Ava to Cochin China, which followed it. The Cochin Chinese Mission was undertaken solely on the authority of the Governor of Kamboja, and without the sanction of his Court. At first, a mere commercial speculation, and not a very judicious one, it assumed in the sequel somewhat of a political character, and the projector was placed at the head of this Mission. He proceeded to Rangoon by way of Penang, and in due course was conducted to the Court. His credentials not being considered here as altogether satisfactory, nor his explanations sufficiently clear, he was, according to Burmese custom, imprisoned and tortured for farther elucidation. It appears that his explanations, under this process, proved satisfactory; and the new King, at the time full of ambition, and meditating projects of conquest against Siam, resolved to take the opportunity of this Cochin Chinese emissary's return, to send an Embassy to the Cochin Chinese monarch to entreat his assistance in the conquest and partition of Siam, which he denounced as a rebel province. As will be seen in the Narrative, the Burman Mission, although hospitably entertained, was not permitted to come to Court, and the King finally declined all political connexion with Ava. The Burmese Mission was sent back, at the expense of the Cochin Chinese Government, and the junks which brought it touched at Singapore. The Ambassadors were Mr. Gibson, a native of Madras, and the son of an Englishman, and two Burmese chiefs. Mr. Gibson was a person of much acuteness, and having resided many years in the Burman dominions, and held considerable offices under the government of that country, he was thoroughly versed in the Burmese language, and intimately acquainted with the manners and customs of the people. He was, besides, well acquaint-

ed with the Portuguese language, with the Hindostani, and with the Telinga; which last may strictly be said to have been his mother tongue. Indeed, saving his acuteness and greater expansion of mind, he was rather a well-accomplished Burmese than an Englishman. While at Singapore, he handed to me his Journal for perusal, authorizing me to make such extracts as I thought proper. This gentleman was so imperfectly educated, that the original was replete with errors in grammar and orthography in every line; and therefore the manuscript as he wrote it was not only unfit for transcription, but, in reality, nearly unintelligible without his own personal comments and explanations; I therefore made an abstract of it, preserving, as far as was practicable, the writer's own modes of expression.

The war with the Burmese having broken out during the stay of the Mission at Singapore, the Cochin Chinese junks which conveyed it were taken under our protection, and safely conducted from Penang to Tavoy. They had not been at this place above two or three days, when the place was captured by a British force. The Burman Ambassadors became prisoners of war, and the Cochin Chinese were sent back in safety to their own country. Mr. Gibson, the Ex-Ambassador of his Burmese Majesty, entered the British service as an interpreter, and, after a few months, died of the epidemic cholera, while our army was on its march to Prome.

NARRATIVE.

We left Rangoon in the beginning of January 1823, in an European-built vessel, and on the 26th February reached Penang, after touching on our way at Tavoy.

While lying at Penang, on the 24th March, a Siamese junk, on fire, ran foul of the Mission ship, and burnt her.

There was hardly time to save the dispatches, jewels, and other presents for the Court of Cochin China.

Having made application to the Governor of Prince of Wales's Island, a loan of 4000 dollars was given to me for a bill on the Myowun of Rangoon.* The Mission then took a passage in a Portuguese ship.

It finally sailed, on the 22d of April, from Prince of Wales's Island, reached Malacca on the 2d of May, and Singapore on the 12th. On the 18th we left this last place, and on the 1st of June reached the anchorage of Vungtaô, or that of Cape St. James in Kamboja.

On the 3rd the Mission reached the village of Canju. Four barges of ceremony came here to receive us from Saigun, to which place we proceeded on the 8th. Seven elephants were sent to the landing-place to receive us when we arrived; and on the same day the governor sent hogs, poultry, fish, &c., with one hundred quans, as a present.

June 10.—The Mission received a visit from the Secretary of the Governor-General. He asked me if we had a copy of the letter from the Burman Government;—why the Burmans, so powerful a people, were unable, after so many attempts, to conquer the Siamese; and what benefit could arise from an alliance between the Burmans and Cochin Chinese, since they were at so great a distance from each other, and therefore not in a condition to act in concert. Finally, the Secretary demanded a translation of the Burman letter.

We replied, that a copy of the letter alluded to was unfortunately destroyed when the Mission ship was burnt at

* The return made for this piece of hospitality was the Myowun's dishonouring Mr. Gibson's draft, and trampling it under his feet. He made it, however, a pretext for levying a contribution on the town of Rangoon, as I afterwards satisfactorily ascertained, while in civil charge of the place.

Prince of Wales's Island; but that when the letter itself was perused, all the objects of the Mission would be fully explained in it. We observed, that we did not consider the intercourse between the Burmans and Cochin Chinese a matter of any difficulty, since the one was in possession of the northern and the other of the southern extremity of the great river of Kamboja; and if the Siamese, who occupied the centre, were conquered, every difficulty would be removed, and an easy intercourse carried on. In another quarter, the two nations, we said, were close to each other; the tribe of the Lenjen, or Laolantao, being the only interruption to an immediate intercourse between the Burman province of Kiangoungé and the kingdom of Tonquin.

We insisted that the Siamese were rebels, having been frequently conquered by the Burmans, and that their subjugation was a point on which his present Burman Majesty was resolved. He was pleased, therefore, to see the Cochin Chinese emissary, who had visited his country, and had taken that opportunity of requesting the assistance of the Cochin Chinese Government, by sending the present Mission; while he had, at the same time, recalled his army in Martaban, to make preparation for the war.

On the same day, two French gentlemen paid the Mission a visit: they informed us that of the many French who were once in the country, two of the elder ones only survived, and that the whole French gentlemen in Cochin China were only five exclusive of missionaries. The present King had openly expressed a dislike to Europeans, and had forbid the open profession of the Christian religion. He has refused to admit the two Bishops into his presence, according to former usage; and when one of them lately presented himself, he insulted him, by offering him a piece of money as to a common beggar.

June 11.—A deputation of officers of rank waited on the

Mission. They requested that the letter of the Burmese Government might be opened, which was done accordingly. They asked for a copy of the original, and that a translation of it might be made in the Siamese language.

June 12.—The Secretary of the Governor-General called to know what progress had been made in the translation. We informed him, that the translation demanded much care and scrutiny, as it was an affair of great moment, and it would take at least four or five days to finish it. He brought an invitation to us to be present at a fête that was to be celebrated in the palace. We accepted this invitation; and then, for the first time, saw his Excellency the Governor-General, a man between fifty and sixty years of age, of small stature, but of great abilities, and reputed a good soldier. He is a native of the province of Mitho, and was educated as a page to the late King Gialong. He was with him when he was a refugee in Siam. His merits soon raised him to confidential employment and higher rank. He is much respected by all the officers of the Cochin Chinese Government, and dreaded by the Kambojans and Siamese.

At this fête we held a long conversation with the chief judge respecting the King of Ava and his country, and on the benefits that would result from an alliance between the Burmans and Cochin Chinese.

June 18.—On the 12th, the translation of the letter from the Burman Court into Siamese not having proved satisfactory, I undertook, with the assistance of the two French gentlemen, and a native Christian missionary, to make translations into the French and Latin languages. These translations were effected, and given in to-day, and with them a Burman copy of the original letter.

June 19.—The second governor gave to-day an entertainment to the Mission. Several Kambojan chiefs were

present: these, as a mark of peculiar favour, are now allowed to wear the Cochin Chinese dress, and to ride in Cochin Chinese litters; but the lower orders of the same people must appear in their native habit, which is nearly that of Siam.

June 20.—A Mandarin waited on the Mission, requesting to be allowed to take a muster of the dress and cap of ceremony of the Burman Ambassadors, for the purpose of being transmitted as a curiosity to his Majesty at Huè.

June 21.—The Mission had a visit from the First Minister of the King of Kamboja, and from the Governor of Kamboja, a Cochin Chinese. The Kambojans, on this occasion, expressed much dislike of the Siamese; but I thought this dislike feigned to please the Cochin Chinese, as I am convinced that the Kambojans are at present much more oppressed than they were under the Siamese Government.

June 30.—The Mission was requested to appear at an audience, for the purpose of exhibiting the presents brought from the King of Ava for the King of Cochin China. These consisted of twenty ruby and as many sapphire-rings; a gold seal and beads; and a box containing four garments of silk cloth. The presents for the Governor-General himself, were ten muskets with bayonets, and a spy-glass, bought at Prince of Wales's Island for the purpose. Much anxiety was expressed by the Cochin Chinese to see the presents: his Excellency the Governor-General asked whether the stones were real or counterfeit; and whether, if the former, the mines were in the country of Ava. It was explained, that the stones were real gems, and that the mines were in the Burman territory, which possessed besides abundant mines of gold and silver. The Governor-General asked whether we were in earnest when we said the Burmese intended to make war on the Siamese;

and he added, that, in his opinion, there must also be a war between the English and Siamese, on account of the Raja of Queda, and the seizure of his country.* I replied, that I had heard nothing of a war between the Siamese and English during my residence at Prince of Wales's Island. The Governor-General farther asked, if the members of the Mission were acquainted with the contents of the letter that came to him from the Governor of Prince of Wales's Island. We said we knew nothing of it, and supposed it contained nothing more than friendly and complimentary expressions. During this visit, the Governor-General was in excellent humour, and spoke of the events of the war between the Burmese and the Siamese, when he was a refugee in Siam, with the late King Gialong, in 1787.

July 1.—The members of the Mission, having got the permission of the Governor-General, paid a visit to the city of Saigun. We travelled on horseback; our course was by a broad high-road with an avenue of trees, and the people and houses were thick on both sides. About half-way we came to two buildings, the one consecrated to the memories of worthies of the military order, and the other to those of the civil rank: in these is deposited a written testimony of the merit of each individual. As a mark of respect and veneration to these buildings, every one that passes by them is compelled to dismount, and we did so accordingly.

The Mission alighted at Saigun, at a magnificent Chinese temple, dedicated to the god of seas and rivers, where we found a collation of teas and sweatmeats prepared for us. In the evening we dined with one of the principal Chinese merchants; we were honoured with the company of Ong-him, the Lord Judge, and Ong-tam-pit, the Treasurer. The former made very free with arrack, and became drunk. On our way back we met a temple of Boodh, containing one

image of that deity seven feet high, and three others of four feet each.

July 3.—The Mission, by a command of his Excellency the Governor-General, took the letter from the Court of Ava to the palace. It was conducted with much ceremony, being carried in a gilt litter, accompanied by two hundred soldiers and many elephants.

July 4.—The original letter of the Burman Government, with the Latin, French, and Cochin Chinese translations of it, were this day dispatched to the capital. The letter of the Governor of Prince of Wales's Island was sent at the same time, unopened. We were of opinion that the Governor-General did not open it, although addressed to himself, for fear of exciting a suspicion in the King and the other principal officers of the Government, that he was carrying on a secret correspondence with the British. The Governor's Secretary, indeed, stated this particularly to myself.

July 5.—We received to-day fifty quans more for our current expenses, and an order to remove to the house usually allotted to ambassadors, which had hitherto been under repair. The house which we had first occupied was required for an Inspector-General, who had come from the capital, deputed by the King, to make military arrangements, to examine into the provinces and cities in the lower part of the kingdom, to see that justice was administered, that the people were not oppressed, and, above all, that the Mandarins took no bribes, which is a capital offence.

July 6.—We paid a visit to his Excellency the Governor, who sent us to wait on the second Governor. Here we met the Kambojan Mandarins, on their way to Court, with offerings for the King. Many inferior Cochin Chinese also presented themselves to pay their respects to the

second Governor, on their return from their tour of duty in superintending the cutting of a great canal between the river of Kamboja and Athien on the Gulf of Siam. The common salutation in Cochin China is to bow to the ground five times to the King, four times to persons next in rank to him, three times to persons in the third rank, twice to any other Mandarins, and once to all superior officers of lower dignity.

July 9.—I paid to-day a visit to the Secretary of his Excellency the Governor-General Ong-tan-hip; we had a great deal of conversation on public matters, chiefly on the benefits that would result from an alliance between the two nations. I observed that the King of Ava had many settlements towards the northern part of the Kamboja river, by the channel of which a great trade might be carried on between the two nations; while, if a road were cut through "Lenjen" to Tonquin, an intercourse might be established in that quarter. I also dwelt on the circumstance of having the King of Queda as an ally, and the facilities which the King of Ava had for raising a naval force for the purpose of laying waste the sea-coast of the Siamese country, on account of the number of seafaring strangers residing in his territories. The Secretary replied with candour: He said that his Excellency the Governor-General was well acquainted with the numbers of the Siamese forces, their discipline, and the Siamese mode of conducting war; but that he was perfectly ignorant of the nature of the Burman army and their habits of warfare. He would therefore never undertake an important business of this description, without being made fully acquainted with the Burman nation and their military condition. I informed him, that he might easily possess himself of this information, by sending back, along with the Mission, a faithful and intelligent person to report.

July 10.—We received fifty quans more for our current expenses, and some rice. Ongbo, our guardian, called upon us, and informed us that on the 12th eleven thieves were to be executed by means of his Excellency's favourite elephant. On these occasions the criminal is tied to a stake, and the elephant runs down upon him and crushes him to death.

July 22.—We received thirty quans more for our current expenses.

July 31.—By invitation of his Excellency the Governor-General, we were present at a ceremony annually performed by him at Saigun, in honour of the memory of his mother-in-law. Such rites are common among the Chinese, but more so among the Cochin Chinese. We arrived in due time at a good house on the bank of one of the canals, which had been the residence of the deceased. Here we found the Governor, the Inspector-general, and a great many other persons of distinction. In the principal chamber or hall of the house, three altars were decorated. After the performance of the usual rites, a splendid entertainment was served to the guests. The Governor and Deputy-governor sat at one table, the members of the Burman Mission, with some Cochin Chinese Mandarins of distinction, and a Kambojan General, sat at another, and the inferior Mandarins at a third table. The retinue of his Excellency the Governor-General was on this occasion magnificent; it consisted of sixty elephants, horses, litters, and a thousand men under arms and in regular uniforms. Every thing glittered with gold, and was conducted without noise or disorder.

August 4.—A courier arrived from the capital, bringing a dispatch: it summoned his Excellency to Court for a few months, provided his presence could be spared in the southern part of the kingdom.

August 10.—The Mission received one hundred and seventy-two quans, with rice for a month. Nothing remarkable occurred. Three or four thieves are executed every week. His Excellency is rigorous in the execution of justice, and permits no one to escape. He says, that wretches of this description are of no manner of use to the public, but, on the contrary, a burden. The Mandarin who brought us up from Canju, has just been convicted of bribery and corruption: the Governor has confiscated his property, confined the persons of himself and his wife, and put the heavy Cangue, or wooden collar, about their necks. The Mandarin's crime was withholding regular payment from the labourers engaged on the canal of Athien, and extorting money from the peasantry of the neighbouring villages. The amount taken did not exceed one thousand quans. In the evening, the Mission was invited to see the elephants exercise. In passing the market-place, we were told that three criminals had been executed there in the morning: their wooden collars were still lying on the ground. As soon as we had reached the southern side of the fort, the approach of his Excellency, mounted on his favourite elephant, was announced by the heralds. A mock fight was represented. The elephants, sixty in number, charged a fence made of fascines and branches of trees, and defended by a line of soldiers, discharging rockets and small-arms. The elephants broke through it and pursued those who defended it, until stopped by the riders. Good order and discipline were preserved, and the commands for advance and retreat given by trumpet and beat of drum. Another species of mock-fight was afterwards exhibited. The elephants were made to attack, two and two, the effigy of a lion and tiger spitting fire, and accompanied by many soldiers discharging fire-arms. Very few of the elephants ventured to attack these objects, but, in spite of

all the efforts of the riders, ran away. One of the conductors received twenty blows on the spot for not doing his duty. His Excellency allowed his favourite elephant to go through his exercise; the animal knelt, inclined his head, and made us an obeisance. He is thirty-seven years old, and the Governor has had him twenty-five years. After the amusements, we were treated with a collation, and the Governor held a long conference with us through the Portuguese interpreter, Antonio. He said he was going to Court entirely on our account; to make ourselves in the mean time comfortable, and that matters would, in most respects, end according to our wishes, as his Majesty seldom acted in opposition to his advice. His Excellency asked whether it was probable there would be war between the English and Siamese, on account of the protection which the former gave to the King of Queda, under pretence that he was their ally, while, in fact, he was a subject and a tributary of Siam. I replied, that the English were too powerful a people for the Siamese to attempt any thing against. His Excellency said, that he supposed the English had an eye on Junk-Ceylon, Pulo, Lada, Quedah, and Perak; which would render Penang the centre of a large trade, and that the Malay peninsula was now necessary to support Penang, as she had lost the trade of the Eastern Countries through means of Malacca. I answered, that this might probably be the case, for that the English were great politicians,—that they did nothing without a reason, and would never make war on the Siamese, unless the latter were the aggressors, but that they never put up with insults. His Excellency the Governor seemed very well informed respecting the results of the wars of the Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte, and particularly respecting the battle of Waterloo, and his death at St. Helena. He said, he lamented the misfortunes of that great man, and ex-

plained to the Mandarins who were round him, that the only fault he found in him, was his vast ambition. He added, that after bringing the world into confusion by long wars, he had finally done nothing for the good of the French nation. He ended his conversation by praising the British nation, but said, that they, too, were over-ambitious.

August 28.—Nothing particular occurred since the 10th. The Mission had frequent reports of executions for theft and adultery. To-day we were informed of the arrival of the aunt of the King of Kamboja. This lady was the wife of a Siamese prince, who, after his death, and having no children, retired to her own country. She expressed a desire to have some conversation with our Siamese interpreter, and he went to her accordingly. This affair was misrepresented to the Governor; and, in consequence, Ong-Bo, the guardian of the Mission, was severely reprimanded; an old Mandarin of inferior rank, attached to our Mission, was punished with the wooden collar; and Antonio, the Portuguese interpreter, received a hundred blows on the same account.

September 1.—This day was fixed for his Excellency's departure for the Court; but the Second Governor, a man about ninety years of age, the only person who could be entrusted with the government, was taken seriously ill; therefore his Excellency's departure was delayed. It was necessary to send for a person, to relieve his Excellency, from Hué. On account of the discontent of the Kambojans, and the intrigues of the Siamese, there is no trusting the southern provinces without a person of energy to rule them.

At this time two horrid circumstances came to the notice of the Mission, which placed the rigorous and arbitrary character of the Governor-General in a strong point of

view. One of the retinue appointed to proceed with him to Court, came to solicit from him, as a favour, that he would allow him to remain a few days behind, on account of the illness of his wife. The Governor became enraged at the proposal, ordered the applicant to be forthwith carried out to the gate and beheaded, which was done accordingly. Nearly at the same time, a native of Tonquin, employed in superintending the canal of Athien, appeared before his Excellency to pay his respects; the Governor had heard something unfavourable of his conduct, and before he had finished the four customary prostrations, he ordered him to be led away and executed in the market-place.

One of the French gentlemen informed the Mission that all his countrymen were preparing to leave Cochin China immediately, as the present King is decidedly unfriendly to Europeans.

Sept. 9.—One hundred and seventy-two quans were sent to the Mission for their monthly expenses.

Sept. 21.—His Excellency the Governor-General visited Saigun to perform funeral rites at the tomb of his father and mother. Since the affair of the visit of the Siamese interpreter to the Kambojan princess, we were very strictly watched and spies placed over us.

October 1.—The Mission received intelligence that a new Governor was on his way to relieve his Excellency, for the purpose of enabling him to proceed to Court.

Oct. 6.—Three junks arrived to-day from the capital, bringing five hundred thousand quans of treasure, for the construction and repair of forts, and the payment of the troops.

The Mission received intelligence that, a few days before, a ship belonging to the King of Siam had been driven into the harbour of Cape St. James, having encountered

a Typhoon on her way to China. The commander requested permission to repair the ship and to be exempted from the usual charges and duties. The last part of the request could not be granted, and therefore the commander resolved to take her to Singapore to repair her there. Another vessel arrived at the same place from England, and last from Hué: this brought several thousand muskets, which the King would not purchase because they were considered of inferior quality to the muskets imported by the French.* The commander brought a letter from Mr. Crawfurd, the new Resident at Singapore, and was very well received by his Excellency the Governor. The only news he brought was the death of Castlereagh, the Prime Minister of England. The members of the Mission were not permitted to see the English commander, and were now as closely watched as if they were confined in a gaol.

By this opportunity the Mission transmitted, through Captain Burney at Prince of Wales's Island, a dispatch to the Government of Ava. One of the French gentlemen undertook to deliver it to the English commander.

Oct. 31.—The long expected arrival of the new Governor was to-day announced to the Mission. His journey from Hué took only nine days. His retinue and escort consisted of six hundred persons; many of whom dropped behind, from the expedition with which he travelled.

The Mission about this time received intelligence that the Siamese Government, having come to the knowledge of the correspondence which is carrying on between Ava and Cochin China, has begun to fortify the city of Bangkok, and had doubled the chain, or bomb, which crossed the river Menam; even the Chinese inhabitants, who are not usually called upon on such occasions, were employed upon these works.

* The arms referred to were old Flemish muskets.—(C.)

We received a summons to-day to appear in the palace. The first object which struck us, as we passed on our way towards it, were two men in the Cangue, or wooden collar, so large that two persons were obliged to assist in carrying it when they moved: they were soldiers, and their crime was disobeying, and using abusive language towards their superior officers.

His Excellency informed us, that he was called to Hué on our business, and should be absent about three months. His successor, a man of about seventy years of age, an old and favourite servant of the late King, sat near him. The members of the Mission were recommended to his care. His Excellency observed, that the affairs of the Burman Mission would be dispatched as early as practicable, but that the business was of much consequence, and required minute consideration; especially as the two nations had hitherto been entire strangers to each other, and a friendly intercourse was commenced between them, only now, for the first time.

After the audience, an entertainment was prepared for us, of which we partook in company with several of the Cochin Chinese and Kambojan Mandarins. His Excellency was on this occasion particularly complaisant, and condescended to sit near us and pay us compliments. We were entertained the whole day long with dramatic exhibitions. On this occasion, we saw at the audience eight persons, very poorly clad, and differing in features from all those about them. The Governor presented them each with a pair of trowsers and a shirt. His Excellency informed us they were the real aborigines of the country, before it was conquered by the Cochin Chinese, and that they were more numerous than the Cochin Chinese.

Nov. 18.—His Excellency yesterday gave over charge of the city and province to his successor, and all the officers

of Government received orders to wait upon the latter, and pay their respects to him. The members of the Burman Mission also received an order to pay their respects, and accordingly waited upon the new Governor to-day; a few soldiers only were in attendance. The Mandarins of the civil order were on the right hand, and those of the military on the left; a neat repast was served, both to the members and their followers. Ong-Bo, our guardian, acted as master of the ceremonies, and through him we received an assurance of protection, and an offer of elephants and horses whenever we wished to go abroad.

Nov. 19.—This was the day fixed for his Excellency the Governor-General Tai-Kun's departure. We waited on him at the place where he was to embark. About five in the afternoon he made his appearance, with a large train, two heralds announcing his approach. He was carried in a gilt litter with a double umbrella over him. A number of boats and people had gone off the day before, and about thirty galleys now attended him, with a retinue of about one thousand persons. He sent the members of the Mission a message, requesting them not to be uneasy, that he would return in three months, and settle every thing to their satisfaction. He appeared melancholy as he sat in his boat. In taking leave, his successor made four prostrations to him, as did all the other Mandarins. The whole party set off in good order, without the least noise or disorder whatever.

Nov. 23.—The galleys returned to-day from Baria, to which place they had conveyed his Excellency, and from whence he was to proceed by land to Hué. Ong-Kiam-Lotò, commander of the artillery, on his return from accompanying his Excellency to Baria, was suddenly taken ill of the cholera morbus, and died at the age of sixty-five. He was placed in a coffin, well caulked and varnished,

which was kept in his house. His family and relations, and every member of the corps of artillery, daily made prostrations before the body, according to custom.

A curious circumstance occurred just before his Excellency's departure. The confinement of Ong-Quan-Tabaonhy and his wife was the result of an intrigue of Ong-Tan-Hiep, the secretary and favourite of his Excellency. This man had been brought up by the Governor from his infancy; he was ambitious, able, and resentful; and hated by every one in office, notwithstanding his being rich and powerful. All the Mandarins above him in rank waited upon him at his house—a matter which we had an opportunity of personally noticing, as his dwelling was close to our own residence. Not a day passed without his receiving some one present or another, which he sold again in a shop, kept by his people, close to his gate; which answered the purpose well, as the house was in the market-place.

The cause of the hatred between this person and Ong-Quan-Tabaonhy was this:—The latter had paid court to a rich and handsome widow, and, after emptying his purse, had nearly succeeded. The Secretary stepped in, and being a younger and better-looking person, and also the favourite of the Governor, he made her change her mind, and she would have nothing more to say to Ong-Quan-Tabaonhy. These persons were never friends afterwards, but each sought an opportunity to injure the other. The Secretary effectually succeeded in this, when, as already mentioned, he detected his rival in extorting money from the labourers on the canal of Athien. One day a handsome concubine belonging to Ong-Quan-Tabaonhy, by name Che-day, met the Secretary on the public road and spoke to him; she told him she wished he would give her permission to come to his house, as she had something particular to communicate to him. He said she was welcome to

come when she liked. She accordingly watched an opportunity, when she had ascertained that he was at home, and called upon him one evening at eight o'clock. She then requested to speak to him privately, and he conducted her into his own apartment, when she entreated him to assist in obtaining her lord's release from confinement. A little after, the family heard her calling out "rape" and "murder." When they came to her assistance, she complained of having been ravished by the Secretary, when she had come to ask for the deliverance of her lord. She then rushed out into the street, crying out in the same manner, and showing every one a lock of the Secretary's hair which she had cut off. In the morning she went to his Excellency the Governor, lamenting her fate, throwing the lock of hair down before him, and calling for justice. Knowing that the crime of adultery is punished by the laws with death, the Governor examined the matter, found it was a plot laid by her and her husband to ruin the Secretary, and ordered her to be punished with a hundred blows. This young woman was not above twenty years of age.

December 1.—The Mission received accounts of a famine having taken place in the northern part of the kingdom, which occasioned the death of many of the poor: it was caused by an unusual inundation of the sea, which had destroyed the greater part of the crops in some districts.

A few days ago, a person was beheaded for flogging his wife, who had died after the punishment, although it was supposed not in consequence thereof. ..

The Government was at this time employed in strengthening the ramparts of the fort of Yadentain* with hewn stones brought from the hills near old Dongnai. A thousand soldiers were occupied on this work day and night.

Dec. 19.—On the 18th, two junks departed for Singa-

* The Fortress of Saigun.—(C.)

pore, and another to-day, by which the Mission addressed a petition to his Majesty the King of Ava, reporting the progress of the Mission.

The brother of the deceased Commander of Artillery had gone to Athien, on the Gulf of Siam, to bring the remains of his brother's wife from some village in that neighbourhood. He returned, bringing two coffins instead of one, and these, with the body of the deceased Commander of Artillery, were now buried together.

Dec. 28.—This was the birth-day of the King's mother, and the town was in consequence illuminated for three nights. An express arrived from the Government, calling Monsieur Diard, the French physician, to Court.

January 3, 1824.—Four junks arrived from China, bringing one thousand three hundred passengers. These pay six dollars each for their passage. After their arrival, they settle and spread themselves in various parts of the country, going as far as the town of Kamboja.

Jan. 6.—The Mission received one hundred and seventy-two quans, and rice from Government for their monthly expenses. We were informed of a certain medicinal wood, called by the missionaries *Akila*,* the best of which is found in the province of Quinhon, and tried its effects upon two of our attendants ill with fluxes: they were both effectually cured in a short time. The Cochin Chinese informed us they used the same remedy in cholera morbus. About this time we observed the soldiers exercised in rowing: this was on shore, in a place made for the express purpose.

Jan. 16.—Another junk arrived from China with four hundred passengers. These Chinese emigrants are settled throughout the country, along the borders of the rivers: their whole baggage, when they arrive, consists of a coarse

* Agila, or eagle-wood.—(C.)

mat, and a small bundle of old clothes full of patches. Thousands of these persons go yearly also to Siam and the Straits of Malacca.

Jan. 30.—Nothing was heard of the business of the Mission down to this time, nor indeed did the members expect to get any account of it until the holidays were over. This was the last day of the Cochin Chinese year, and the shops being only open in the morning, the people were busy in laying in provisions for the next four days, when there would be no market. Before every house there was erected a tall rod, on which was suspended betel and tobacco, as an offering to the gods.

Jan. 31.—This was the first day of the year. The people left off all manner of work, and tricked themselves out in their gala-dresses, going from house to house to visit each other. At every house was laid out a small table, containing sweatmeats and a lighted taper, which was an offering to the memory of their ancestors. The people, of all ages and descriptions, were seen gaming in every part of the town; and day and night were heard squibs, crackers, and other descriptions of fire-works. On the seventh of the moon, those who can afford it visit their nearest friends and relations and make them presents. In the evening, the tall staff, with the offering of betel and tobacco, is struck. The table with the offering to ancestors is also uncovered, and the contents distributed amongst the nearest elderly relations of the party. Before this is done, however, the inmates of the house and all the visitors prostrate themselves before it. The Cochin Chinese eat of every description of animal food, without distinction, and do not object to dogs, cats, rats, alligators, &c.

Feb. 13.—We were informed, through different channels, that an order had arrived from the Court to prepare a vessel to carry us back to Ava.

Feb. 14.—To-day the arrival of Ong-Tan-Hiep, the Secretary, with a dispatch from the Court, was announced to the Mission. He came overland in twelve days. We now got some information regarding our own particular business.

Feb. 18.—This was the seventeenth day of the moon, and the termination of the holidays. A salute of three guns was fired from the rampart of the fort, which was followed by a discharge of muskets and crackers from the houses of the town. The whole troops were drawn out, and, with drums beating, and colours flying, they marched with much ceremony round the glacis of the fort. After this they proceeded to the river-side, where three galleys were lying prepared, from which salutes were fired, and returned with a discharge of muskets as before. The galleys then sailed about the river in procession, accompanied by a great number of small boats, ornamented with little flags, banners, lanterns, and spears.

About seven o'clock in the morning, a royal order from the King was conveyed from the house of Ong-Tan-Hiep to the Governor's in the fort with much ceremony, on a gilt stage; six elephants followed in procession, and many of the principal Mandarins attended. The new Governor appeared in a splendid military dress, having the emblem of a lion on his robe. As far as concerned the interests of the Burman Mission, we learned that three Mandarins and a Secretary, with seventy persons as an escort, were directed to accompany us back to Ava. The names of these Mandarins were, Ong-Kin, Ong-Kian, Bie Voung, and the Secretary Ong-Tri-Bohé. Ong-Kin was by descent a Chinese; his father was the chief of a gang of Chinese pirates who assisted the late King in reconquering his country. He entered into the King's service at Pulo Condore, and was created commodore of the pirate fleet, which he had brought from the coast of China. These people, when the

war was over, received a settlement on the left bank of the river, where they or their descendants still exist to the number of three or four hundred, receiving regular pay and rations from the Government, and being ready for service when called upon.

Feb. 19.—To-day we paid a visit to the Governor, and were informed that a vessel was preparing to convey us back to our native country.

Feb. 22.—We received accounts, that the persons constituting the deputation which was to return with us had received an accession of rank, and that a person of superior dignity was expected from the capital with a letter and presents to his Burman Majesty.

Feb. 25.—A fire broke out to-day in the market-place, close to the Secretary's dwelling; the Governor himself appeared on the spot to assist in extinguishing it. In consequence of the exertions that were made, and the vicinity of the place to the river, two houses only were destroyed.

Feb. 26.—Coe-Doe-Lam* arrived from the capital, and by him the Mission had certain intelligence that the Governor-General would not return to the southern provinces before the month of May, and until he had assisted in the celebration of the nuptials of his nephew Cadoa with the sister of his Majesty, and daughter of the late King. He stated that his Excellency, on his arrival, had recommended the opening of the public granaries; and that rice, in consequence, had fallen in price to half a quan a basket. The scarcity had occasioned a revolt in Tonquin, and the rebels there would not lay down their arms until they had a personal conference with the Governor.

Feb. 27.—Another fire broke out close to the house oc-

* This was the Cochin Chinese emissary who had gone to Ava, and whom I have mentioned in the introduction to the Narrative.—(*C.*)

cupied by the Mission, which by great activity was soon extinguished.

Feb. 28.—Monsieur Diard arrived from the capital, and the members of the Mission were informed that the presents for his Burman Majesty were coming overland. Monsieur Diard was appointed by the Cochin Chinese Court to accompany the Burman Mission, and showed the Ambassadors the mandate of the King to that effect, under the seal of the Mandarin of Strangers. He also stated that he had been expressly called to Court, and he related the whole circumstances of the transaction respecting our Mission, as it had taken place. He stated that the Mandarin of Strangers had made a speech in the Great Council against the Burman alliance, asserting that it would alarm the Siamese, and make an unfavourable change in their sentiments towards the Cochin Chinese nation. The King demanded to know whether his counsellors were afraid to enter into this new alliance; and observed, that one thing was quite certain,—that the Burmans were the avowed enemies of the Siamese. His Excellency the Governor-General Tai-Kun and the two French Mandarins, Vanier and Cheneaux, spoke in favour of the Burman alliance. They said, that the Burmans were the inveterate enemies of the Siamese, and that through them the Cochin Chinese might again become possessed of the fruitful Kambodian province of Bantaibang, and so a free commerce, favourable to both sides, might be established. The results of this debate were adverse to a connexion with the Burmese, although I am unable to explain the cause of so unfavourable a determination in the mind of the Cochin Chinese King. Upon the whole, however, I am inclined to ascribe this conduct to the extravagant conceit of the Cochin Chinese nation; who firmly believe themselves, and the Chinese from whom they are descended, to be the only civilized people in the world, and

all other nations savage and barbarous. As to the Siamese, the King of Cochin China thinks he could conquer them in an instant if he desired it. There is not a person of sense about the Court or Government except the Governor-General Tai-Kun, who often smiles at the absurdities of the rest, and has even hinted to the King the extravagance of his pretensions,—since he is, in fact, no more than a tributary of the Emperor of China.

March 4.—The war-junk intended to convey us to our own country was this day launched.

March 6.—The Mission received to-day five hundred and sixteen quans, and one hundred and forty-one baskets of rice, reckoned to be three months' stock of provision for the voyage. We were requested to repair next morning to the fort, for the purpose of viewing the letter and presents to his Majesty of Ava.

March 7.—At daylight the members of the Mission repaired to the fort on foot, ushered by a Mandarin of the civil order. We missed upon this occasion our old guardian, Ong-Bo; and making inquiry, found he had been dismissed from his office. In the front part of the hall of audience, we found the letter to the King of Ava, laid out on a table, and the presents arranged to the left of it. Within the hall, four tapers were burning. The Mandarins of the military order were in one line on the right hand, and the civilians in another on the left. All were standing up, and in their dresses of ceremony. Shortly after, the Governor made his appearance, and took his place on the right-hand side; next to him stood an elderly Mandarin, said to be the General-in-chief of the Army of Lower Cochin China; the rest followed according to their ranks. At the head of the left or civil side was Ong-hoaing, the Treasurer; Ong-kim, the First Judge, came next; then the comptroller. The Secretary was only fourth in rank.

The music began to play, and heralds on both sides having given the signal, the whole of the Mandarins advanced to the centre of the hall, and made five prostrations to the throne, as if the King himself had been sitting on it. The Mandarins who were to accompany the Burman Mission then made their prostrations. The members of the Burman Mission were then ordered to advance and bow five times in a similar manner, which they did. The King's orders respecting the Mission were then explained to them, the presents to his Burman Majesty were enumerated, and the gifts conferred upon each member of the Mission, individually, were stated. After this ceremony, we were conducted to the house of the Governor, where we had a long conference respecting the affairs of the Mission, and particularly concerning what related to our return. We now retired, accompanied by the King's letter and presents, which were conveyed with much state, and deposited in the hall of the house where we resided. The gifts intended for the individuals of the Mission were then distributed according to their ranks.

March 10.—To-day we proceeded to the fort and delivered the presents of his Burman Majesty. The Mandarins received them with great respect, in a standing posture.

March 12.—The members of the Burman Mission, according to custom, repaired this day to the palace to return thanks for the gifts which the King had condescended to confer upon them. We appeared, on this occasion, in dresses bestowed upon us by his Cochin Chinese Majesty, and the courtiers and ourselves performed the same ceremonies and prostrations as on the 7th. After this was over, the Governor entertained us at his house, and amused us with Cochin Chinese plays. We then finally took leave.

April 1.—On the 12th and 13th of March the presents and baggage were put on board. On the night of the 13th and the morning of the 14th two fires broke out. In the evening of the last day we embarked, and dropped down the river with the ebb-tide.

On the 15th and 16th the crew were engaged in cutting firewood for the voyage.

On the 17th we reached the village of Kanju. On the 18th and 19th the crew were occupied in watering. On the 20th we again dropped down. On the 21st we anchored off Kauro. Here we continued till the 24th; the Cochin Chinese insisting, that although the wind was fair, the period was, according to their astrology, unlucky. On this last day a foul wind came on, and at night we weighed with the land breeze, but anchored again off Cape St. James; the Cochin Chinese officers alleging that it was necessary to make a report of their progress to the Government. On the 26th, a dispatch-boat arrived from Saigun to know what had become of us. While we lay here, three trading junks for Singapore passed us. We finally sailed on the 30th, lost sight of Cape St. James on the 31st, and this day got sight of Pulo Condore.

April 9.—This day we safely reached Singapore, after a voyage of ten days from Cape St. James, and twenty-six from Saigun. Here we were informed that there was a war between the English and Burmans.

ABSTRACT OF NOTES APPENDED TO MR. GIBSON'S JOURNAL.

(GEOGRAPHICAL NOTICES.)—To the northward of the great river of Kamboja, called, in the Burman language, Meh-koan-mit, the King of Ava has many settlements, but particularly Kiang-ung-gi and Kiang-si. From these an

easy communication by water might be established with the southern provinces of Cochin China, and a great trade conducted between the two nations.

From Kiang-ung-gi to Tonquin, called by the Burmans Kio-pagan, there would also be an easy communication, if a good road were cut. The nation called by the Cochin Chinese Lao-lan-tao, and by the Burmans Len-jen, will prove the only obstacle to this intercourse. These barbarous people lie to the eastern side of the great river of Kamboja, and, being in alliance with the Siamese, obstruct the intercourse between the two kingdoms.

From the royal city of Ava, in a right line due east to the river of Kamboja, is a distance of no more than one hundred geographical leagues. Twenty days' journey would conduct a traveller to Kiang-ung-gi. From Kiang-ung-gi, through Lao-lan-tao and Sandapuri, to Bak-tin, or Kachao, the capital of Tonquin, the distance is only seventy leagues; about one-third part of which only is in possession of the tribe Lao-lan-tao. From the range of mountains which separate the Lao-lan-tao and the dominions of Cochin China, the great river of Tonquin has its source.

The proper Cochin Chinese are descendants of the Tonquinese, who in times not very remote extended their conquests to the south. The Cochin Chinese territories at present seldom exceed beyond ten and fifteen leagues from the coast, being generally bounded to the west by Lao, or Kamboja. The aboriginal race, which inhabited from the province of Quinhone to Cape St. James, were called Loi. These are still confined to the mountains as a distinct race, doing homage to the King of Cochin China. Their chief lives at a place called Phan-ri, about ten leagues from the sea-coast. These people still profess the Hindu religion, and abundant relics of Hinduism are scattered over the

country, in the form of temples, images, and inscriptions. This is the country called by the Chinese, and in our own charts, " Champa."

The province of Dong-nai was originally peopled by the race called Moi, now confined to the mountains, and said to be more numerous than the Cochin Chinese. These people follow the Buddhist religion, and not the Hindu.

To the west of Cape St. James, and as far as the latitude of 14°, is the proper country of Kamboja. North of it lies the kingdom of Lao.

From Athien to Tung-yai on the sea-coast, the people are said to be called Kom. I suspect this to be a mistake, and that Kom is only another name for the Kambojans.

Kamboja is called by the natives Namvuam, and in Sanscrit, or Bali, Maha Notkorlorot Kamer, and by the Cochin Chinese Komen.

In the tenth century they were a powerful people. Dong-nai, Phan-ran, and Siam being then tributary to them; but shortly after this they began to decline, and Siam threw off their yoke, and became an independent kingdom.

The Tonquinese and Cochin Chinese are the same people and speak the same language. In ancient times, the King of Tonquin appointed a Governor-General to the northern provinces, extending to Quin-hone, whose residence was at Hué. This person, the ancestor of the present race of kings, rebelled,—dethroned, and decapitated the King of Tonquin, seizing his kingdom.

The victorious usurper was acknowledged by the Chinese, to whom he declared himself nominally tributary, according to custom. In time, he and his successors conquered from the Kambojans the provinces of Quin-hone, Nhatrang, Phan-ran, and Phu-yen, known to the Chinese by the general appellation of Champa. These countries

were inhabited by the race Loi, who professed the Hindu religion, and are now confined to the mountains by the oppression of the Cochin Chinese.

More recently, the Cochin Chinese conquered the province of Dong-nai, and planted colonies of their countrymen at Que-douc, Sa-dek, Mitho, Camao, Saigun, Dountain, and many other places.

The country from Sa-dek to Athien has recently been converted into a Cochin Chinese province, by the appellation of Ya-din-tain.

The present King of Kamboja, whose name is Luang-hang-tek, resides at a new city, called Kalompé, which at present contains no more than five thousand inhabitants. The old city, Pong-luang, is fifteen miles distant from it.

The original inhabitants of Dong-nai, called Moi, as well as those of Champa, called Loi, were driven into the mountains by the oppression of the Cochin Chinese.

When the father of the present King of Kamboja died, he was an infant of six years of age. When he grew up, he had quarrels with two of his brothers, who fled to Siam: while fearing the effect of their intrigues at that Court, he sought refuge at Ya-din-tain. Tai-kun, the present Governor, marched to his assistance with thirty thousand men. He met the Siamese army on their way to take possession of Calompé. A conference took place, and a peace was concluded, by which it was agreed that Kamboja, as heretofore, should remain tributary to Cochin China; and the rich province of Bantaibang remain with the Siamese, the great lake of that name being the boundary between them. The Kambojans are greatly oppressed by the Cochin Chinese. The King can do nothing without the consent of the Governor-General at Saigun.

(Saigun.)—The fort of Yadin-tain was built by M. Olivia. In form it is a quadrangle, of one-fifth of a Bur-

man league to a side. It has eight gates, two on each side, which are of masonry, but the ramparts are of earth. It has a ditch and a hornwork, and two canals are cut from the river which reach near to it: by these, which are full at flood, there is a communication with the river, affording facility for conveying goods and provisions. I estimate the population of Yadin-tain, Saigun, and Bawghue at sixty thousand inhabitants, one-fifth of which are Chinese.

This is the residence of the Chinese merchants, where there are Chinese goods always for sale, and where are collected the articles of exportation for the Chinese market. The place is intersected with many canals communicating with the main river, and boats come up and unload cargoes at the merchants' doors. From hence there is a communication by water with the great river of Kamboja.

(Dong-nai.)—Dong-nai was the old capital of the province when the Kambojans were in possession of the country. It was then a place of considerable size and trade, but is at present in a very decayed state. The Cochin Chinese, when they conquered the country, removed the seat of government to Saigun, which was more conveniently situated for shipping, and they called the new city and province Ya-din-tain.

(Canal of Hatian.)—About 1820, a canal was commenced from Que-douc, on the western shore of the great river, to Athien, on the coast of the Gulf of Siam. Twenty thousand Cochin Chinese and ten thousand Kambojans were employed upon this work: it is from two to three fathoms deep. The workmen were paid at the rate of six quans per month, and it cost the Government four hundred thousand quans. No provision was made for supplying the workmen with water, so that ten thousand of them perished from thirst, hard labour, or disease. The object of this great undertaking, was to open an easy intercourse

with Kamboja and Siam, by which the boats and war-galleys might convey troops without the necessity of undertaking the precarious voyage round the Cape of Kamboja.

(Elephants.)—Every Kambojan chief formerly made a trade of breeding elephants, which are sold by them to the Cochin Chinese and Siamese. Good ones fetched from fifty to one hundred quans. They are very plentiful in the upper country, at Pontai and Lao, but the present Cochin Chinese Government allows but ten quans for each elephant, which has put a stop to rearing them.

(Malays.)—There are a number of Malays settled on the eastern coast of the Gulf of Siam; these are emigrants from Tringano and Patani.

(Christians.)—I was informed by Father Francis, a Neapolitan missionary residing at Saigun, that at Cheguam, between the fort of Ya-din-tain and the town of Saigun, where he himself resided, there are twelve hundred Christians. In the province of Ya-din-tain there are in all about twenty-five thousand Christians, and a hundred churches. The pastors are three European and ten native missionaries.

During the lifetime of the late King and of the Bishop of Adran, the Christian religion was much respected. It is still openly professed in the lower part of the kingdom, where the Christians have the protection and encouragement of the Governor-General Tai-kun. They are, however, every where so poor and miserable that they have little time to attend to their religious duties. At a place called Lang, is the tomb of the Bishop of Adran. Fifty families were assigned by the late King to watch it, who are still exempted from all other duty on this account.

(Buddhist Religion.)—Between Yadin-tain and Saigun is a temple of Buddha, containing one image of that deity seven feet high, and three others of four feet each,

in a sitting posture. I held conversation with the Bonzes attached to this temple, who seemed to be very ignorant; for they could tell nothing of the propagation of their religion in Cochin China, but that it had come from the western country. Behind the temple is another building, containing the names of deceased Bonzes: this was held in great veneration..

APPENDIX B.

INSTRUCTIONS

TO JOHN CRAWFURD, ESQ. AGENT TO THE GOVERNOR-GENLRAL, ON A MISSION TO THE EASTWARD.

POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

SIR,

YOUR appointment as Agent to the Governor-General, to proceed on a Mission to Siam and Cochin China, has been already notified to you in my letter of the 1st instant; and I am now commanded, by the Most Noble the Governor-General in Council, to furnish you with the necessary instructions for your guidance.

2.—You are aware, that in the earlier period of the Indian commerce of the European nations, the trade of Siam and Cochin China constituted no unimportant branch of it; and that during their struggle for superiority among themselves in India, and those contests with the native powers which led to the establishment of territorial possessions, the commerce with those two countries was overlooked or neglected; so that, during the first half of the last century, that trade became extremely inconsiderable, and during the

last seventy years may be looked upon as having altogether ceased.

3.—From the most authentic information in the possession of this Government, there is every reason to believe that the industry and civilization, together with the geographical position and natural fertility of soil which characterise the kingdoms of Siam and Cochin China, are such as to render it extremely desirable, under the present stagnation of trade, to negotiate with the Sovereigns of those countries the renewal of a commercial intercourse with Great Britain and her Indian domjnions. The subject, indeed, of cultivating a more intimate connexion with Siam has been repeatedly brought to the notice of the Supreme Government by the Government of Penang, and towards the end of last year, a proposition from that Government to depute an Agent to Siam received the sanction of his Lordship in Council. That sanction has, however, only been partially acted on, and the design may now be conveniently superseded by the Mission which his Excellency in Council has resolved to commit to your charge.

4.—I now proceed to state to you some general Rules and Observations for the guidance of your conduct in the execution of the important duty in which you are about to engage.

5.—It is not unknown to you, that among the various states of farther Asia, beyond the peninsula of Malacca, a very general fear and distrust of Europeans, highly detrimental to the interests of commerce, is predominant; resulting, it is too much to be feared, from the violence, imprudence, and disregard of national rights, which occasionally characterised the conduct of all the European nations in the earlier periods of their intercourse. The first object of your attention will be to endeavour to remove every unfavourable impression which may exist as to

the views, or principles, of the Honourable Company and the British nation, in seeking a renewed connexion solely for purposes of trade.

6.—The Governor-General in Council does not contemplate, in the first instance, the practicability of establishing our commercial relations with the countries in question upon a permanent and beneficial footing, by the absolute removal of those restrictions which national jealousy and ancient prejudices at present oppose to the progress of external commerce. His Lordship in Council entertains hopes, however, that well-timed and judicious representations on your part to the Rulers of these countries, may have, in a great measure, the effect of disarming their apprehensions, removing their antipathies, and, by so doing, laying the foundation of a friendly intercourse, which may prepare the way for the establishment of a commercial relation, commensurate in extent with the apparent resources and population of those extensive regions, and our known capacity to supply their wants.

7.—After the first establishment of a friendly intercourse with the nations in question, his Excellency in Council conceives that the trade with them will require little assistance in the way of diplomatic agency; and that its prosperity and extension will mainly depend upon the degree of freedom with which it may be conducted on both sides, and the experience of the mutual advantages it may confer. Upon this principle, you will carefully refrain from demanding or hinting at any of those adventitious aids or privileges upon which the earlier traders of Europe were accustomed to found their expectations of commercial benefit; such as the establishment of forts and factories, exemption from municipal jurisdiction and customary imposts, monopoly of favourite articles of produce, and exclusion of rival European nations. Upon a dispassionate

review of our commercial transactions in former times, his Excellency in Council is disposed mainly to attribute to the effect of the unpopular privileges so obtained, and to the indiscreet exercise of them, of which so many examples are recorded in the history of that period, the subsequent extinction of our commerce, as well as that of other European nations, or its arbitrary restriction, with all the considerable and independent countries of farther Asia.

8.—Independently of the obstacles which jealousy of the European character opposes to the establishment of a commercial intercourse, we have to contend with another difficulty common to all the nations which bear any mark of the Chinese stamp of civilization,—real or pretended contempt of foreign traffic in general. Under the influence of this feeling towards the traders who may resort to their ports, they impose on them various vexatious restrictions. For example, the Sovereign, in particular cases, claims and exercises the right of preemption, and retains in his own hands a monopoly of certain articles most in demand, while the exportation of some of the native productions of the country is altogether prohibited. Your attention will of course be directed to the means which, in your judgment, will be most conducive to the remedy of this serious obstacle to the freedom of commerce, and by employing such arguments and representations as are most applicable to the character of the people, and least likely to offend their national pride or excite their jealousy.

9.—Adverting to the state of civilization and the peculiar character of the people to whom you are deputed, his Excellency in Council sees less causes to apprehend obstruction to an improved commercial intercourse from the avowed magnitude of the imposts on external trade, than from the vexatious mode in which they are levied. His Lordship in Council considers the levying of duties in kind,

the rude examination of a cargo in detail by the native officers, the depredations to which it is thence liable, and the irregular exactions of the revenue officers, to be such serious impediments to the operations of commerce, that a still higher rate of impost, levied in a less exceptionable manner, would be greatly preferred. If urged with prudence, it is not at all improbable that the native Governments may be induced, as well from the apparent as the solid advantages of such an arrangement, to accede to it. With this view, his Lordship in Council would suggest the advantages of establishing, in lieu of all others, one simple impost in the form of a duty upon tonnage or measurement—a mode of proceeding which, it is believed, is not inconsistent with the established usages of those countries. Any trifling inequality which might arise in practice from the adoption of this principle, would be much more than compensated by the exemption from vexatious interference which it would secure.

10.—In conformity with the principles now laid down, adapted to the people among whom you are to appear, and the relative situation of the British Government in India, in regard to them, you will be furnished with letters to the Kings of Siam and Cochin China, in the terms of the English drafts which accompany these Instructions.

11.—With regard to the practical details which may arise out of the principles above stated, and which must be, in a great measure, contingent upon the knowledge you obtain in the progress of your mission, his Lordship in Council relies on your judgment and experience, and necessarily commits the conduct of them to your discretion, to be regulated according to circumstances.

12.—Although Government is not inclined to contract formal treaties, lest the native Powers to whom you are now deputed should capriciously imagine their indepen-

dence or their prerogatives compromised by such engagements; yet, his Excellency in Council is sensible of the great advantage which would result from obtaining from the Cochin Chinese or Siamese Government official and authentic records of such concessions as they might be induced to make to the freedom and security of commerce, either in the form of letters from the Sovereigns to the Governor-General, or from their Ministers to yourself, in the character of an edict addressed to their subjects.

13.—As his Lordship in Council conceives that, after the first establishment of a friendly intercourse with Siam and Cochin China, the extension and improvement of our amicable relations with these states will be greatly promoted by the maintenance of epistolary communication, you will see the propriety of encouraging a correspondence respectively on the part of the Sovereigns with the head of this Government, and on that of his Ministers with the subordinate Governments of India, especially with the Government of Prince of Wales's Island, and the Chief of the settlement of Singapore. This will have the salutary effect of impressing the native Governments with a conviction that our traders resorting to their ports have the constant protection of their own Government, while it will not be accompanied by any of the inconveniences that may result from an attempt to exercise a more direct control.

14.—The Governor-General in Council calculates on your being able to proceed from hence, at the very latest, by the 1st of November. It is to be hoped you will reach Siam, which will be the first object of your attention, about the middle of December; touching at Prince of Wales's Island and Singapore for necessary information and assistance. If, as Government has reason to hope, your reception by the Court of Siam be friendly, it is not proposed to limit your residence there to any specific period, but to leave it

to your own discretion; keeping in mind the advantage which may result from remaining for such a time as will afford you an opportunity of attaining a competent knowledge of the character of the Court, the manners of the people, and the resources of the country.

15.—After accomplishing the objects of the Mission, as far as Siam is concerned, it will be necessary for you to return to Singapore or Prince of Wales's Island, and there await the favourable monsoon, to prosecute your mission to Cochin China. In your voyage from Siam to the Straits of Malacca, an opportunity will be afforded you of examining, and reporting upon, the condition and resources of the tributary and petty States upon the shores of the Gulf of Siam; but you will be careful to satisfy yourself, in the first place, that your holding communication with these chiefs will not excite the jealousy of the Siamese Government, nor give cause of complaint to the Dutch, that we are interfering with the settlements which they may have formed in that quarter.

16.—The Governor-General in Council contemplates the probability of your reaching Cochin China in the month of May, with the commencement of the westerly monsoon.

17.—In your intercourse with a Court so jealous of strangers, and so reluctant to enter into any intimate intercourse with the nations of Europe as that of Cochin China, much care and circumspection will be necessary. Should the Mission be so far countenanced that you are called to the Court, you will endeavour to prolong your stay at the capital, that you may thus be afforded an opportunity of acquiring an acquaintance with the genius and habits of the Cochin Chinese Court, and of availing yourself of such favourable occasions as may from time to time occur, for disarming the jealousies of the Cochin Chinese, and for inclining them to cultivate a more intimate connexion with

our nation. His Lordship in Council is not unaware, that, in the endeavour to attain the objects of your mission at Cochin China, you will have to contend with the previously established, and possibly adverse influence of other European nations at that Court. It will be your especial duty, however, as far as practicable, to make yourself acquainted with the views and policy of those nations, and the footing on which they stand with the native Government; also avoiding, however, any appearances that may countenance the erroneous belief, that your mission is directed towards objects of a political nature.

18.—Looking to a successful reception of your mission at Cochin China, it is supposed that you may be detained in that country until the beginning of July. At this period it will be impracticable, or difficult, to return to the westward against an adverse monsoon by a direct passage.

19.—Your easiest route will therefore be by the established Eastern passage, which, without inconvenient loss of time, will enable you to touch at Manilla, the Sooloo group of Islands, the independent portion of the Spice Islands, with such other countries by the way as are not under the control of other European nations. These countries are all imperfectly known, and a knowledge of their social condition and commercial resources is intimately connected with the great object which the Government have in view by your mission—the extension of the commercial relations of the nation in general, and more particularly of its Asiatic possessions. It is not the wish of the Governor-General in Council, however, that you should enter into any negotiation with the rulers of those countries. The expediency of any extension of the views of Government in that direction will be matter for future consideration; and it is probable that the deliberations of his Lordship in Council may be materially influenced by the information

which you will obtain. After thus completing the objects of your mission in the manner above pointed out, you will return to Singapore and Penang; and unless you should, at either of these places, find instructions of a different tenour awaiting you, you will be pleased to proceed directly to Bengal.

20.—Having thus sketched out the general objects of your mission to Siam and Cochin China, it is necessary to revert to the views and objects of the Government of Penang, in suggesting at various times the deputation of an Agent to Siam, as stated in the third paragraph of the letter.

21.—In the year 1813-14, an application was received by the Government of Prince of Wales's Island from the King of Queda, for the friendly interference of the British Government in his favour with his superior, the King of Siam. On that occasion, the Government of Prince of Wales's Island referred the question to the consideration of the Supreme Government, when it was determined that, whatever might be the claim which the King of Queda might be thought to possess to the attention and regard of the British Government, our mediation for the adjustment of the differences subsisting between Siam and that country might lead us into an embarrassing participation in the interests and concerns of one or both States; and the Government of Penang was accordingly instructed to limit its proceedings to opening a communication with the King of Siam, and addressing a letter to him, framed in conformity with the views and principles which were distinctly laid down for its guidance. The subject was resumed in the year 1818, when the Governor of Prince of Wales's Island recorded a Minute, taking a full view of the former proceedings regarding the King of Queda, and another tribu-

tary of Siam, the Chief of Pera, and stating his deliberate opinion of the great political and commercial advantages which the Government of Penang would derive from cultivating a more intimate connexion with Siam. Copies of the whole correspondence which passed between this Government and the Government of Prince of Wales's Island on the occasions above adverted to, and also of a later correspondence in the year 1820, which led to his Lordship in Council sanctioning the deputation by that Government of an Agent to Siam for purely commercial objects, are now inclosed for your information.

22.—Although the Governor-General in Council is solicitous to avoid mixing any thing of a political nature with your negotiations at Siam, it seems desirable that you should be in possession of the grounds on which the Governor of Penang has felt an anxiety for the security of the States of Queda and Pera; and that you should be prepared to avail yourself of any favourable opportunity of accomplishing the wishes of the Governor in Council by a friendly and unostentatious representation to the Court of Siam. His Lordship in Council relies entirely on your discretion for acting on this suggestion, or abstaining from any advertence to the subject, according to the experience you will obtain of the general disposition of the Siamese Government, and the chances of an overture of this nature meeting with a favourable reception. Your visit to Penang will enable you to learn from the Honourable the Governor in Council the actual state of the relations between Siam and its dependencies in the Malayan Peninsula, and to ascertain more precisely the views and objects of the Governor of Penang with regard to those States.

23.—You will be provided with letters to the Honourable the Governor of Prince of Wales's Island, and also to

the Resident of Singapore, who will be requested to afford you any information or assistance in promoting and facilitating the success of your mission.

24.—You are apprised that the ship John Adam has been taken up for the accommodation of yourself and suite, and will be at your entire disposal; the commander being instructed to consider himself subject to your orders in every matter, saving what may be connected with the immediate navigation of the vessel.

25.—His Lordship in Council proposes to appoint Captain Dangerfield, of the Bombay establishment, to be your assistant, with a monthly allowance of six hundred rupees. With a view to provide against the contingency of your illness, or other casualty exposing to injury the special service entrusted to your care, Captain Dangerfield will be authorized, in such event, to assume charge of the Mission, and act upon the instructions contained in this letter.

26.—A party of thirty Sepoys, under the command of a native officer, will be attached to the Mission. Lieutenant Rutherford of the 14th Native Infantry, will be ordered to do duty with the escort.

27.—You will be furnished with a small supply of instruments for surveying, to be used in the event of circumstances being favourable for such operations. His Lordship in Council is satisfied that you will carefully avoid any use of them which can tend in the slightest degree to excite the jealousy of the Governments to which you are accredited. A medical officer will also be attached to the Mission, and it will be the endeavour of Government to select for this duty a gentleman qualified by scientific attainments to avail himself of any opportunity that may offer of extending our knowledge of the natural history of the countries which you will visit.

28.—In conclusion, I am directed to desire that you will

report to me, for the information of his Excellency in Council, the progress of the Mission from time to time; and that, in addition to an ample diary of your proceedings, you will be prepared, on the termination of the duty now assigned to you, which it is calculated will not exceed a twelvemonth from this date, and your return to Bengal, to submit a full and digested account of the transactions and negotiations in which you have been engaged, and of the information on all points connected with the objects of the Mission, which you may have been enabled to collect during the period of your employment

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

Council Chamber,
29th September, 1821.

GEO. SWINTON,
Secretary to the Government.

APPENDIX C.

His Excellency the Most Noble the Marquis of Hastings, Earl of Rawdon, &c. &c. &c. Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Military Order of the Bath, Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Hanoverian Order of Guelph, one of his Britannic Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, a General of his Forces, Governor-General of the British Possessions in India, and Commander-in-Chief of the Troops of his Majesty and the Honourable the East India Company:

TO HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF SIAM.

In token of the esteem and respect of the English nation for your Majesty, I send into your presence my Envoy,

with an earnest desire to promote the friendship and intercourse which has of late so happily recommenced between the English and Siamese nations.

The nations of Europe, after many years of war, are at peace with each other; and Hindostan, which for ages had been the prey of war, of anarchy, and of disorder, is now in a state of universal peace and tranquillity.

The influence and authority of the British nation extends from Ceylon to the mountains which border upon China, and from the confines of Ava to those of Persia, over ninety millions of subjects, and we desire not to increase it.

While tranquillity reigns within, we are at peace and friendship with all the neighbouring nations; with the Kings of Eastern and Western Persia, with the Princes of Arabia, with the Turkish Sultan, and with the Emperor of China. With their subjects our merchants conduct an extensive commerce. With mutual advantage to both sides, and with freedom and security, their traders frequent our ports, and ours resort to theirs. Commerce, while it enriches the subjects of a state, tends to make them better known to each other, and becomes, at the same time, a bond of friendship between their rulers.

The great King of England, separated from his Indian dominions by the distance of half the globe, is too far away to govern them directly himself, and has delegated to me his authority. I anxiously desire the happiness and prosperity of the people thus entrusted to my care, and solicit for them the advantage of an intercourse and friendship with so great a monarch as your Majesty. I therefore invite the resort of your Majesty's subjects to our ports and harbours for the purposes of trade; and I entreat your Majesty's protection for all the subjects of Great Britain, European or Indian, who, in like manner, may visit your Majesty's dominions for the purposes of commerce.

I desire from your Majesty neither port, settlement, fort, nor factories; neither do I claim that our merchants resorting to your Majesty's country should be exempted from the authority of its laws. But if any regulation of your Majesty's Government touching foreign commerce should be found to bear hard upon our merchants, and thereby prove an obstacle to the extension of their trade with your Majesty's dominions, I shall trust to your Majesty's wisdom and friendly disposition to have them modified or removed

Mr. Crawfurd, the Envoy whom I have chosen to represent me in your Majesty's presence, is well acquainted with my wishes, and in conference with your Majesty's Council will be able to make such an arrangement as will conduce to the wealth and prosperity of the Siamese and English nations. Mr. Crawfurd was my representative for several years at the Court of the Sultan of Java, and I have selected him on the present occasion to repair to your Majesty's presence, because he is well acquainted with the manners and customs of the nations to the Eastward, from his long intercourse with them. He enjoys my confidence, and whatever arrangements he may conclude with your Majesty's Government will receive my sanction and approbation.

Mr. Crawfurd will offer your Majesty certain gifts in my name.

APPENDIX D.

His Excellency the Most Noble the Marquis of Hastings, Earl of Rawdon, &c. &c. &c. Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Military Order of the Bath, Knight Grand

Cross of the Royal Hanoverian Order of Guelph, one of his Britannic Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, a General of his Forces, Governor-General of the British Possessions in India, and Commander-in-Chief of the Troops of his Majesty and the Honourable the East India Company :

TO HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY THE EMPEROR OF ANAM, CAMBOJA, AND LAOS, &c. &c. &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR IMPERIAL MAJESTY,

The Most Noble the Governor-General of India has received with deep concern the accounts of the death of your Majesty's illustrious father and predecessor, and sends his Envoy into your presence to condole with you upon so great a misfortune; and at the same time to congratulate your Majesty on your accession to the throne of Anam.

The English are at peace and friendship with the nations of Europe and the East; and Hindostan, which had not for centuries known the blessings of repose, is in peace and tranquillity. The authority and influence of the British nation extends from Ceylon to the mountains which border upon China, and from the country of the Burmans to that of the Persians.

My powerful and august Sovereign, at too great a distance to govern these vast regions, has delegated to me his authority, and I am, in consequence, charged with the government of a country equal in extent to the greatest empires of the East. Anxious for the prosperity of the people entrusted to my care, I solicit for them the friendship of your Majesty and your people.

Both the Western and Eastern subjects of Great Britain conduct a peaceful and beneficial commerce with the Persians, the Arabians, the Turks, and the subjects of the

Emperor of China. I entreat for them a renewal of the commerce which the English in ancient times conducted with the subjects of your Majesty's ancestors, upon such terms and conditions as your Majesty is wont to grant to the Chinese and other foreign nations.

Should it be agreeable to your Imperial pleasure, and consonant to the laws of your empire, that your merchants should, like the Chinese, the Siamese, the Persians, and Arabians, visit our ports and harbours, they will receive the most friendly welcome and protection.

The English desire neither lands, forts, nor factories within your Majesty's dominions, and they solely rely upon your Majesty's wisdom for that protection which will enable them to conduct a trade beneficial to themselves and to your Majesty's subjects.

My Envoy, Mr. Crawfurd, will make himself acquainted with your Majesty's pleasure touching all these matters, and, I trust, will be able to make such an arrangement with your Majesty's Council, as will lay the foundation of a lasting friendship between the Cochin Chinese and English nations. He has been chosen by me upon this occasion, because he has represented me before at the Courts of the Princes to the Eastward, and has been long accustomed to the manners and habits of the people of that quarter. Whatever arrangements he may conclude with your Majesty's Government will be sanctioned by me.

He will present your Majesty, in token of my esteem and respect, with certain gifts.

I have only farther to assure your Majesty of my profound respect and esteem.

APPENDIX E.

MATERIALS OF THE MAP.

The maps for the present work were compiled and engraved by Mr. John Walker, a gentleman who has long and successfully cultivated the field of Asiatic geography. If I may presume to offer an opinion, he has on the present occasion skilfully availed himself of the scanty materials which were placed in his hands. Of these the following is a short account:—

The Province of Martaban is delineated from a survey by Captain Grant, of the Indian Surveyor-General's department. The country between the Martaban river and Tavoy is taken from a survey by Captain John Lowe, who travelled over it. From Tavoy to Mergui is from a map furnished by Mr. Maingay, the officer in civil charge of our recent acquisitions to the south of the Martaban river; and from Mergui to Junk Ceylon is taken from a sketch by Captain Burney, who visited this part of the coast. Penang and its neighbourhood are delineated from an actual survey by Mr. Fletcher. Singapore and the adjacent islands are taken from surveys by Captain Franklin and Lieutenant Jackson. The Malayan Peninsula throughout is delineated from the accurate nautical charts of Captain Horsburgh. From the Cape of Patani to the point of Kwi is taken from a Mohammedan mariner, a native of Siam, possessed of considerable intelligence—who was acquainted with the use of maps and the quarter-staff, and could even take an altitude of the sun with our quadrants; no mean proficiency in an Indian.

The head of the Gulf of Siam and its eastern shore, down to Kangkao or Hatian, are from the same authority; many points being determined, and the whole arranged

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